Neil Gaiman & Dave McKean's
MR. PUNCH
...15 copies of this new £8.99 full colour graphic novel to be won! See page 17

Comics INTERNATIONAL

Issue 49 December 1994 | The Comics Industry Monthly | 50p / $1.25 88 pages

Ultraverse and Bravura imprints change publisher

Marvel acquires Malibu Comics

MARVEL Entertainment Group successfully outbid major film and computer game companies to acquire California-based Malibu Comics for an undisclosed sum on November 3rd, 1994.

Founded by Scott Rosenberg in 1986 with a single title, Malibu rose to prominence last year with the consolidation of its primarily black-and-white titles into the more tightly focused full colour *Ultraverse* superhero line, plus licensed titles including **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** and **Mortal Kombat** and the *Bravura* creator-owned line. The success of the comics and Malibu's aggressive marketing campaigns rapidly transformed the company into one of the top five US adventure comics publishers, bringing them to the attention of market leaders Marvel and DC.

Stan Lee launches Excelsior Comics ... 2

While Malibu will remain autonomous, retaining both its staff and independent imprints, Rosenberg —now a senior executive vice president of Marvel — comments, "Our merger launches a new era, and we will capitalize on Marvel's financial and marketing muscle."

Right: *The most profitable film of 1994,* ***The Mask****, returns to its comicbook roots for a continuing monthly series by creators John Arcudi, Doug Mahnke and Keith Williams. Priced $2.50, Dark Horse Comics'* ***The Mask #1*** *(cover opposite) ships on February 28th 1995, introducing a five-issue storyline which features a new owner of the mystical mask and his attempts to turn the city into a more fitting environment for his bizarre identity.*

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A Quality Communications magazine

NEWS · AMERICA ·

Marvel Comics editorial restructuring

FOLLOWING four weeks of speculation, during which time Marvel postponed its distributor meeting and made changes to its convention plans, an entire reorganisation of senior editorial staff has been announced.

The changes follow the departure of Marvel Comics' editor-in-chief Tom DeFalco who, though not leaving the company, moves to the position of vice-president of global publishing.

In a move to make the company more competitive, the structure with one editor-in-chief for over 100 monthly titles is being replaced by a group of executive editors with specific duties or families of titles to oversee.

The General Entertainment group and the Marvel Universe group will be jointly run by Bobbie Chase, Mark Gruenwald and Carl Potts. The X-Men family will be headed by Bob Harras and the Spider-Man titles will be controlled by Bob Budiansky.

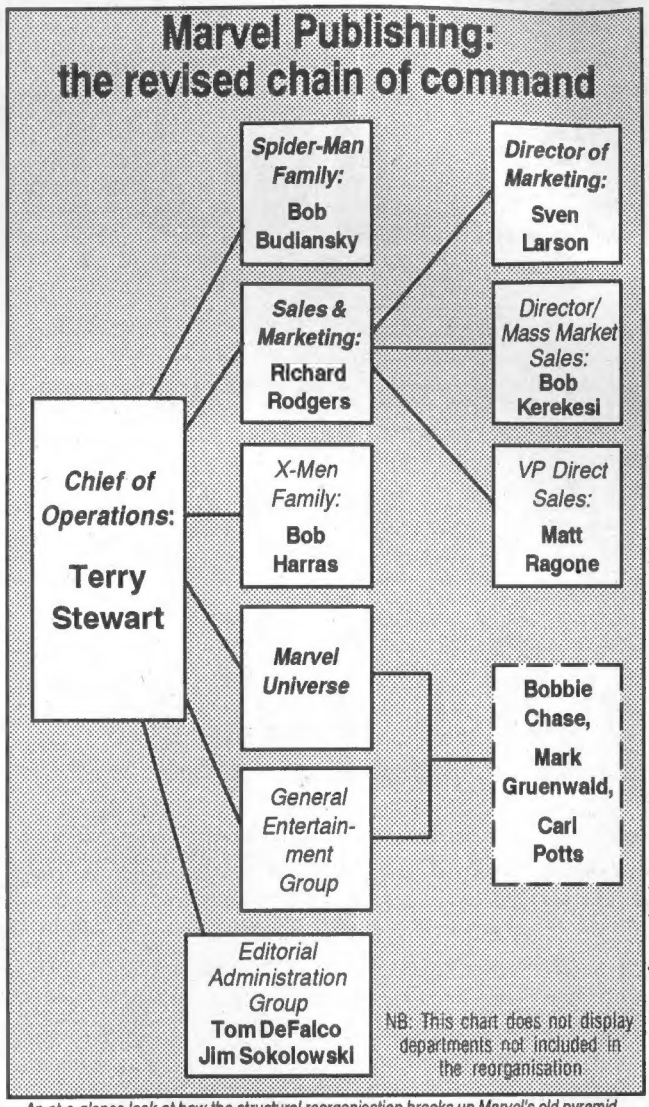
Under Marvel's new system, the four executive editors will report directly to Terry Stewart and run their families of titles separate from each other, each with their own publishing logos which may, or may not, be accompanied by a smaller Marvel banner.

Each group editor will have their own marketing specialist from the Sales and Marketing department, allowing for a diversity in approach, through promotion, co-op advertising and even the appearance of the books themselves.

The four group editors will exercise far more control over projects than ever before in Marvel's history, from title creation through to marketing the finished product, making the groups more individualistic and inevitably more competitive.

One welcomed change will be in inter-group crossovers, which will become more story-led and smaller, more akin to DC's recent Superman-Milestone Universe story rather than full-range crossovers which can be off-putting both to fans and retailers.

These changes in editorial control also allow editors to develop a hitherto unheard-of degree of autonomy which may lead to some top creators returning to work with senior editors on Marvel projects.


Marvel Publishing: the revised chain of command
Chief of Operations: Terry Stewart
Spider-Man Family: Bob Budiansky
Sales & Marketing: Richard Rodgers
X-Men Family: Bob Harras
Marvel Universe
General Entertainment Group
Editorial Administration Group Tom DeFalco Jim Sokolowski
Director of Marketing: Sven Larson
Director/ Mass Market Sales: Bob Kerekesi
VP Direct Sales: Matt Ragone
Bobbie Chase, Mark Gruenwald, Carl Potts
NB: This chart does not display departments not included in the reorganisation
Thanks to Tom Flinn, Capital City for the chart idea.

An at-a-glance look at how the structural reorganisation breaks up Marvel's old pyramid structure (with one editor-in-chief) in favour of decentralised groups, similar to DC's approach.

The sales and marketing department will be run by Richard Rodgers, with specific tasks going to Matt Ragone, vice-president of direct sales; Sven Larson, director of marketing; and Bob Kerekesi, director of mass market sales. It is understood that marketing will also have a much bigger say in the launch or cancellation of titles.

These changes fit in perfectly with Marvel's acquisition of Malibu which, run autonomously, could be considered a fifth group in the new structure. Malibu's in-house colouring department, its creator-led Bravura imprint and its west coast location can also be seen as being obvious benefits to their new owners.

Excelsior Comics

It has been announced that Marvel publisher and co-founder Stan Lee will be writing two new titles from California under the Excelsior Comics imprint in mid 1995, with John Romita Sr and Steve Ditko being mentioned as possible artists. The intention is to gradually expand to no more than six or eight monthlies by the end of 1996. It is also understood that Marvel's acquisition of Malibu Comics will tie-in closely with Excelsior as Malibu is well situated to editorially package Stan Lee's new titles.

Marvel also announced that, in the wake of the Panini acquisition, it has further strengthened its position in the young reader market through buying Welsh Publications, publishers of magazines based on **The Simpsons, Barbie, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers** and **Batman** and **Superman**.

New readers: begin here

Comics International *is a monthly industry newspaper devoted to the comics medium. As such, it provides details of forthcoming UK and US comics and related items, together with reviews and commentary on current titles.*

Certain products mentioned are not available through regular news agent outlets, but only from the 'direct sale' comics specialist retailers and mail order companies. Details of specialist outlets are advertised throughout the magazine, and a listing of the major specialists in Britain is given in our Retail Index and Mail Order Index sections.

Shipping dates *mentioned for North American titles are the dates copies leave their printers to be air-freighted to distributors for direct sale outlets approximately one week later. These dates and titles do not relate to on-sale dates or titles for news agent copies.*

The Marvel and DC titles on news trade distribution are on sale in the UK approximately two to three months after the air-freighted copies can be bought through specialist shops and mail order companies dealing with 'advance imports'. Because of the additional shipping costs incurred, these advance copies are sold at a higher price than the UK cover price.

American dollar prices *are listed for US titles with most UK comic shops converting at the rate of 80p = $1.*

Most reputable mail order dealers bear a CoBRA seal on their advertisements. For full details concerning advertisers displaying this Mail Order Protection seal, see page 86.

Cult fantasy film producer launches new comics company

DESPITE the spate of recent publishing casualities as the US comics market continues to contract, cult fantasy movie producer Roger Corman's new Cosmic Comics line is set to begin publishing in April 1995.

Its first two releases will be the ongoing **Death Race 2020** and the three-issue mini-series **Bram Stoker's Burial of the Rats**.

These will be followed in May by a three-issue series **Welcome to the Little Shop of Horrors**. All three titles will be published monthly and retail for $2.50.

● **Death Race 2020** (cover above, by Stan Manoukian & Vince Roucher) is written by Pat Mills and Tony Skinner with art from Kevin (**Marshal Law**) O'Neill. It continues the story from Corman's film *Death Race 2000* starring John Carradine.

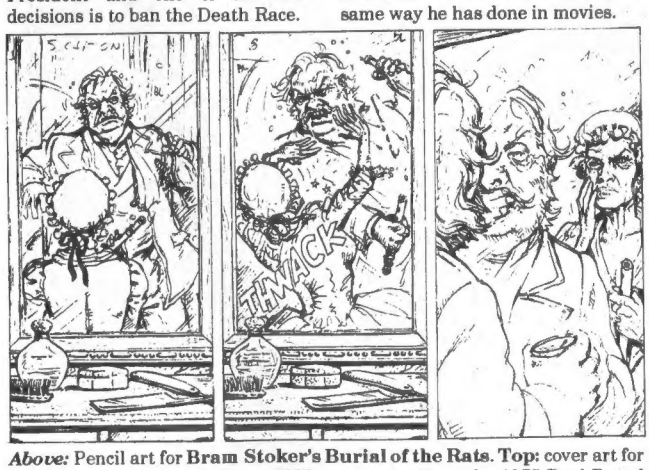
It tells how Death Racer Frankenstein has now become the President and one of his first decisions is to ban the Death Race.

● **Bram Stoker's Burial of the Rats** is adapted by new **Animal Man** writer Jerry Prosser with pencils by Francisco Solano Lopez. **Man Thing** veteran Val Mayerik will ink the mini-series (see below).

The story is about a feckless young man captured by a band of warrior women and develops his relationship with their leader, the Rat Queen.

● **Welcome to the Little Shop of Horrors** is an adaptation of Corman's 1960 comedy/drama. The comic is written by critically acclaimed independent writer J. R. Williams (creator of **Crap** for Fantagraphics). Art is handled by Gene Fama and Dean Rohrer.

Future launches will include **Rock 'n' Roll High School** and an adaptation of the movie **The Wasp Woman**. Corman states that he intends to use Cosmic Comics as a platform for talented young creators as well as established creators in the same way he has done in movies.



Above: Pencil art for **Bram Stoker's Burial of the Rats**. **Top:** cover art for the first issue of **Death Race 2000**, continuing from the 1975 Paul Bartel directed movie starring Sylvester Stallone and David Carradine.

IN BRIEF

Elektra's evil

THE creative team of Dan Chichester and Scott McDaniel, who returned **Daredevil** to high sales and critical acclaim, have collaborated to produce a new four-issue mini-series starring Frank Miller's ultimate femme fatale.

This new series, **Elektra: Root of Evil**, follows the former lover of Matt (Daredevil) Murdoch on the trail of her doppelganger and the organisation that created it. But she soon realises that there is a familiar face lurking amongst members of the organisation known as Snakeroot.

The first issue ships on January 10th and is in the $2.95 Marvel Select format.

Spotlight on Cap

MARVEL has announced that January will be *Captain America month*, and will be launched with the four-issue **Marvel Spotlight on Captain America** mini-series. The weekly shipping 48 page comic reprints some of the patriotic superhero's most popular adventures since his relaunch in **Avengers** #4 in December 1963.

Also shipping in January are **Captain America #1 Marvel Milestone**, **Avengers #4 Marvel Milestone** and **Captain America's Collector's Preview** which will look at the events set to take place during 1995 which will culminate in an all-new looking Captain America by the end of next year.

Babe's back

JOHN Byrne's **Babe** returns for a two-issue series beginning in March.

After the success of the first series, Byrne, who has placed his **Next Men** series on temporary hold, pits the super strong Babe against **Monkeyman & O'Brien** foes Shrewmanoid and the cantankerous creature crew.

The first issue retails for $2.50 featuring a painted cover by Gary Cody over Byrne pencils.

Nexus vs Vortex

THE Mike Baron and Steve Rude created superhero **Nexus** returns in an all-new five-issue Dar Horse mini-series that pits the alien defender of justice against a group of *Comics' Greatest World* heroes.

It tells how Nexus travels to Cinnibar Flats in search of the galaxy's most notorious mass murderer, the Man from the Vortex.

Nexus: Out of the Vortex #1 is written by Baron with art from newcomer Joe Comstock and ships on February 14th, priced $2.50.

Delano Ghostdancing

MYSTICISM in modern times and a quest to transform the world are the major elements of **Ghostdancing**, a new six-issue series from Vertigo.

Written by Jamie (**Animal Man**) Delano and illustrated by Richard (**Doom Patrol**) Case, it tells of native American shaman Snake, his quest for a new Love Generation and the discovery of new drug called Ghostdancing.

The first issue, recommended for mature readers, ships on February 7th and retails for $1.95.

Bloodlines reprise

A NUMBER of the new DC heroes created during 1993's **Bloodstorm** annuals are to join forces in the new four-issue mini **Blood Pack**.

Written by Charles Moore, with art by Chris Taylor and Andy Lanning, the first $1.50 issue ships on January 17th.

Re-united again

Writer Steven (**Edge**) Grant and artist Mike (**Secret Wars**) Zeck became hot creators after their revamping of **The Punisher's** origin in Marvel's 1986 mini-series. Now they are to reunite for a two-part Batman story entitled *Criminals*, beginning in the $1.95 **Legends of the Dark Knight** #69, shipping on January 13th.

A sequal to the mini-series devoted to the inhabitants of Batman's Gotham City is due for release on January 31st. **Batman: Gotham Nights II** will be produced by the original series' creative team of John Ostrander, Mary Mitchell with veteran Batman artist and inker Dick Giordano.

Issue #1 retails for $1.95.

Shazam monthly

FOLLOWING the critical success of **The Power of Shazam** graphic novel, Jerry Ordway continues his relationship with C. C. Beck's Golden Age creation in the new ongoing monthly, **The Power of Shazam**.

Ordway will write the series which is set to place the original Captain Marvel firmly within DC's superhero universe . With artwork by Peter (**Metropolis: SCU**) Krause and Mike (**Batman**) Manley, the first standra format issue ships on January 31st and retails for $1.50.

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Jonah Hex meets Oscar Wilde

VERTIGO is following up last year's surprise hit **Jonah Hex: Two Gun Mojo** with a new five-issue prestige mini-series featuring the western character who made his debut in **All-Star Western** #10 in 1972.

Jonah Hex: Riders of the Worm and Such will be produced by the **Mojo** team of Lansdale, Truman and Glanzman. It tells of the meeting between Hex and the outrageous British poet Oscar Wilde, plus a ranch full of singing cowboys and the mysterious deaths of panhandlers throughout Texas, who turn up headless and bloodless.

Timothy Truman sums up **Riders of the Worm and Such** saying,"It's kind of like Cthulhu [the HP Lovecraft dark gods] meets the Melody Ranch. It's a splatter musical western. **Two-Gun Mojo** was just a splatter western." Issue #1 ships January 31st, priced $2.95.

*Above: art from **Extreme Sacrifice**, a story that brings in major changes at Extreme Studios. Following the conclusion of the **Extreme Sacrifice** story arc scheduled to begin in January, all loose ends will be tied up and half of the Extreme universe will be destroyed. **Prophet** #7 and **Youngblood** #10 are key issues in the nine-part crossover which will deal with the final fate of Chapel and reveal Bloodstrike's true identity. The **Extreme Sacrifice** series starts in **Extreme Sacrifice Prelude** (which will contain scene-setting chapters by Rob Liefeld and Stephen Platt) and continue in issues of **Supreme**, **Bloodstrike**, **Brigade**, **Newmen**, **Team Youngblood**, **Prophet**, **Youngblood Strikefile** and end in **Extreme Sacrifice Epilogue**. Matt Hawkins, representing Extreme's marketing stated firmly, "This is the end of Extreme as we know it."*

IN BRIEF

Comics casualties

AS the market toughens further, two more publishers have cited "difficult comic book market conditions" as reasons for suspending publication of their titles.

Bart Sears' Ominous Press, publishers of **Brute & Babe**, have placed on hold all but their November and December solicited items. All other products are suspended for an indefinite period.

Silver Moon, the comics subsidiary of film producers Full Moon, announced their formation and a range of titles at the 1993 San Diego Comics Convention. They cite bad trading conditions and restructuring of Full Moon's management as the reason for a suspension of their entire publishing arm before a single comic title has even appeared.

The price of comics

THE US trade paper **American Bookseller** conducted a survey recently to compare the inflation rates of various entertainment media from 1969 to 1994.

The results proved interesting:

- Paperback book prices have risen from an average of $1.95 to $6.96 representing a rise of 356%.
- The price of the Woodstock rock festival rose from $16 in 1969 to $135 in 1994. A rise of 844%.
- An album or CD has risen from an average of $1.99 to around $16.99, a rise of 854%.
- A cinema ticket has risen from 75 cents to $7.50, a rise of 1000%.
- But the entertainment medium which has increased in price the most since 1969 is the comic book, which has gone from an average price of 12 cents to an average of $1.50. A rise of 1250% in 25 years.

This works out to be more than three times the figure that **American Bookseller** estimated as being the normal rate of inflation for this period, that being 400%.

However, these statistics only spotlight the averages in price of products. In the last year the average price of a comic book has risen from $1.50 (most comics before the boom were $1.00 to $1.50) to $2.37 due to the glut of $2.00, $2.25, $2.50, $2.95 and more expensive prestige format comics and trade paperbacks which were not in circulation when the 1969 figures were assessed.

Penthouse change

AS OF issue #6, the adult anthology title **Penthouse Comix** is expanding into two formats: the continuing magazine-sized newsstand edition and a new comic-sized Direct Market edition.

Both versions will retail for $4.95 and ship in February.

Wildey dies

VETERAN western comics artist Doug Wildey died on October 5th in Las Vegas, aged 72.

Wildey, an artist for over 40 years, gained the recognition of his contemporaries with his **Rio** graphic novels, but will be best remembered as the creator of **Jonny Quest** and artist on Mark Evanier's run for DC's **Blackhawk** title.

At the time of his death, Wildey, was working for Hanna Barbera, with whom he had had a long relationship on a **Jonny Quest** live-action film and a cartoon series.

Nocturnal debut

BRAVURA kicks off 1995 with its latest release **Dan Brereton's The Nocturnals**, a six issue series following the exploits of Doc Horror (visual below), a haunting underworld figure who, along with his daughter, leads a band of non-human renegades in a war with the criminal element in their city.

The Nocturnals has a cast of characters including Halloween Girl (who talks to ghosts); Starfish (an amphibious girl); Komodo (a reptile man); Firelion (a patchwork kinetic strong man); The Gunwitch (a gunslinging scarecrow zombie); and Polychrome (a pacifist wrath).

The Nocturnals ships in January retailing at $2.95, and the first issue will feature a limited edition glow-in-the-dark cover.

Western reprints

VALIANT has announced a new series of classic Western/Gold Key material to be reprinted using state-of-the-art computer enhancement and new colouring techniques.

Turok - Son of Stone, Doctor Solar - Man of the Atom and **Magnus - Robot Fighter** will chronologically reprint the earliest adventures of these current Valiant mainstays and a special two-issue mini-series reprints **Captain Johnar and the Aliens**, the original Manning back-up feature of **Magnus Robot Fighter**.

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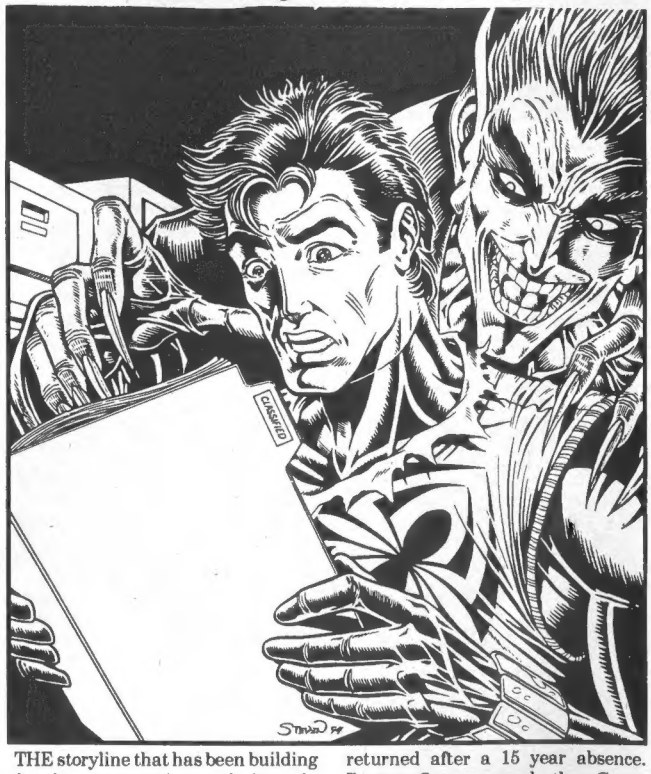
Above: a Leonard Manco character sketch of one of the characters in the March shipping ***Druid****. Marvel obviously has high hopes for Warren Ellis's new ongoing series as the comic will be co-launched as an electronic comic on a floppy disc suitable for either IBM or Apple computers on which, as well as Ellis's and Manco's work, there will be a soundtrack by a popular indie rock band.*

The final days of the Spider



THE storyline that has been building for almost a year is to culminate in the February shipping **Amazing Spider-Man** #400 with the death of a member of the Parker family and a long buried secret confronted.

Over the last twelve months, the life of the Wall-crawler has been turned upside down as events have driven him to the brink of insanity.

First his marriage began to break up, then his Aunt May suffered a heart attack (her first for 12 years!), then the clone of Peter Parker returned after a 15 year absence. Doctor Octopus and the Green Goblin have both died tragically in front of the web-slinger and now The Spider is about to break. The presumed dead Jackal returns to present Peter Parker with evidence that his entire life has been a lie.

All the Spider-Man titles are double-sized during February and feature multi-levelled debossed covers. **Amazing Spider-Man** #400 retails for $3.95, while the other titles will retail for $2.95.

Marvel's Nick Fury: take eight

NICK Fury returns in a new ongoing comic, for what will be his eighth Marvel series.

Fury of S.H.I.E.L.D is written by Howard (**Power & Glory**) Chaykin, who has been involved with three other Fury projects, **Scorpio Connection**, **Scorpio Rising** and the **Marvel Spotlight** origin issue.

Art for the new series is by former **Supreme** artist Cortney Lehmkuhl and inker Mark McKenna.

The head of espionage agency S.H.I.E.L.D, Nick Fury first appeared as a WWII tough-guy in Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's **Sgt Fury and his Howling Commandos** in May 1963.

Courtesy of Jim Starlin and Howard Chaykin, it was explained in **Marvel Spotlight #31** how a middle-aged 1940s solider could still be in action as a Colonel for a contemporary covert action agency in *Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, a series which began in **Strange Tales** #135 and peaked under the pen of then-new comics creator Jim Steranko, leading into Fury acquiring his own title. While Steranko managed only four stories, the 1968-launched **S.H.I.E.L.D** comic lasted 18 issues.

Two reprint series followed in 1973 and 1983, and then, in 1988, Bob Harras and Paul Neary redefined the character in the critically acclaimed prestige format series **Nick Fury vs S.H.I.E.L.D.**

On the strength of that series, in 1989 Marvel relaunched Nick Fury once more, with creators Bob Hall and Kieth Pollard. But unlike other auspiciuous launches of the same year such as **Wolverine** and **Excalibur**, **Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D** suffered from inconsistent creative teams and was cancelled with #47 in 1993.

Over the years, Fury has proved to be the perfect foil for other characters, co-starring with Wolverine, Captain America and the Black Widow in a number of full-colour graphic novels.

Earlier this year, Marvel released a one-shot featuring this character who has often been more at home as a supporting player. Its apparent success has led to the new series.

The first $2.50 issue ships on 21st February with a foil-etched cover.

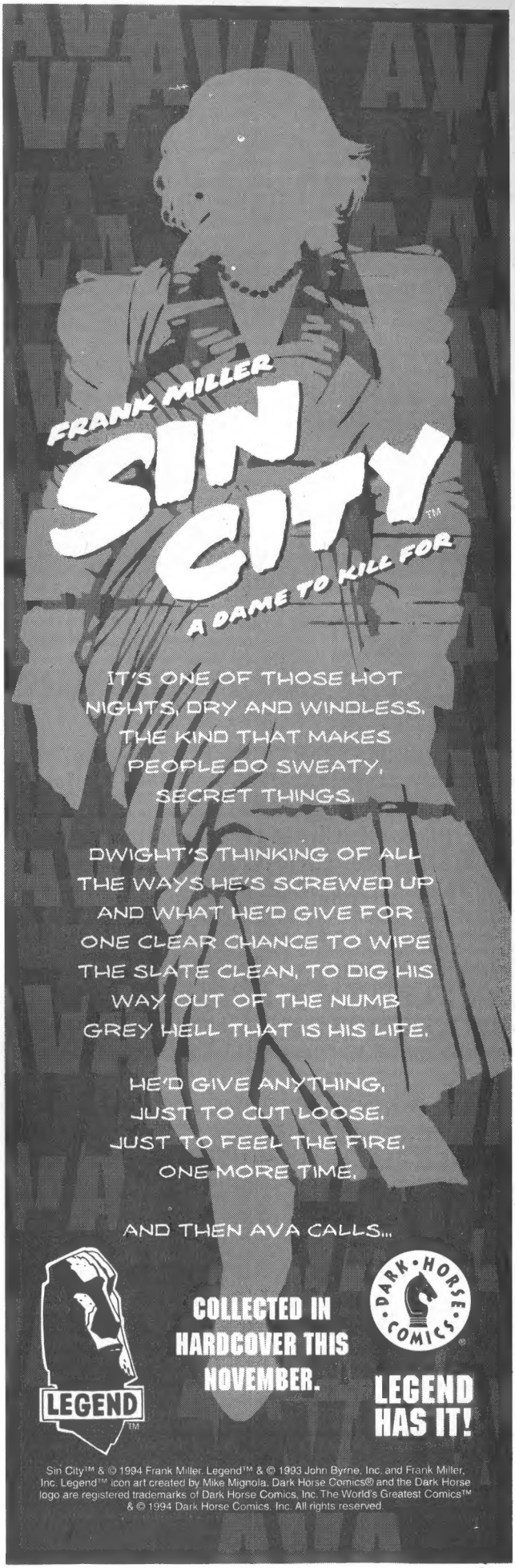
Fury overkill?

Also due in February are two 48 page specials featuring Fury.

- **Nick Fury/Black Widow: Death Duty** is by Cefn Ridout and Charlie Adlard and features the re-appearance of the Dez Skinn-David Lloyd Marvel UK creation, Night-Raven, a prototype of V for Vendetta.
- In **Nick Fury/Captain America**, new series writer Howard Chaykin teams up with Britain's Andrew Currie and inker Tom Palmer for a story about the Titanium Man and the mysterious new villain Agent Orange. Both books retail for $5.95.

Also due in February are:

- A **Nick Fury Ashcan**, priced 75c.
- A reissue of Goodwin & Chaykin's hardcover graphic novel **Nick Fury & Wolverine: The Scorpio Connection** (which, despite a $16.95 tag, will retail for $7.95).
- A reissue of the Harras/Neary **Fury vs SHIELD** trade paperback, which will also be discounted, this time from $15.95 to $9.95.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● AVENGERS #4 (1964) 1st Silver Age Captain America [vfn+]	£300-350
● FANTASTIC FOUR #25 (1964) Hulk v Thing [vfn+]	£180-220
● AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #2, 4, 7, 8, 14, 16, 17, 19 (1963-4)[fr/gd]	No Reserve
● 3-D BATMAN (1966) Infantino cover art, glasses unused [vfn]	£140-180
● OUTER LIMITS (1964) Bubbles Inc. Trading card set complete [fn/vfn]	£80-100
● X-MEN #14-45 (1964-7) 32 issue unbroken run [fr/gd]	No Reserve
● KNOCKOUT COMIC#1-50 (1939-40) Each issue offered separately	See Catalogue
● JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #76 (1961) Page 16 original artwork by Jack Kirby	£100-150
● BEANO COMIC #333, 336, 338, 340 (1948) Go boffo for Biffo [fn/vfn]	£40-50
● BLACK BOB Annual 1 (1950) Sheep dog trial verdict [vfn]	£60-80
● LADY PENELOPE'S FAB 1 (1966) Dinky #100. Pink condition	£180-220
● BATMAN, ROBIN, PENGUIN, SUPERMAN (1974) 8" Mego figures unboxed	£20-30

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DC 100th issue celebrations

1995 will feature no less than five of DC's flagship titles reaching their 100th anniversary issues.

DC has announced that, following their celebratory issues, major changes will be made to the characters.

The February shipping **Flash** #100 will conclude the current *Terminal Velocity* serial in which the scarlet speedster's life hangs in the balance.

One month later, **Superman** #100 includes a dramatic turning point in the Man of Steel's life as he abandons his Clark Kent alter-ego after his identity is discovered by one of his greatest foes.

In April, **Justice League America** #100 features the unveiling of a new team and the mystery of an icey vigilante is revealed in the resolution of a subplot which has been running for ten issues.

May's **Wonder Woman** #100 delivers the conclusion of the "new Wonder Woman" saga, as the one true Amazon warrior stands revealed.

Following this is **Green Arrow** #100 which has a massive change in the status quo of the emerald archer as he becomes less of a "real-life" vigilante and more involved with the DC superhero universe and its super-villains.

Other anniversaries during the next twelve months include **Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight** #75 and **Deathstroke, the Hunted** #50 in July and **Superman: The Man of Steel** #50 in September.

New Supermen from Skybox

THE NEW **Superman: The Man of Steel** 150 trading card set is released this month by Skybox.

Featuring the full colour painted artwork of Jon Bogdanove, John Bolton, Dave Dorman, Scott Hampton, John Higgins, Ray Lago, Joe Phillips, Denis Rodier and Bill Sienkiewicz, the cards are being produced in two versions.

The Premium Editions feature silver foil-stamped and embossed "steel plate" borders on every card plus sux spectra-etched chase cards, averaging one per seven packs.

The Collector's Edition will feature the same artwork but with metallic ink borders and four one-in-18 random inserted "Forged in Steel" chase cards.

The Premium Edition cards carry a recommended retail price of $3.99 per six-card pack and the Collector's Edition cards should retail for $1.19 per pack of six.

Kitchen Sink: From Inside

FROM Inside is the story of a pregnant woman named Carolyn, and her journey through a world of violence, unfaltering hope and unlikely guardian angels.

Kitchen Sink publishes this 288-page, full colour, limited signed and numbered softcover, which is written and drawn by John Bergin, a critically-acclaimed creator whose work has also appeared in Slave Labor's **Brain Dead**.

Bergin is perhaps best known for his collaborations with **The Crow** creator, Jim O'Barr. The two worked together on O'Barr's latest project **Gothic**, for which Bergin supplies a back-up strip. The two also worked on the Kitchen Sink anthology **Bone Saw**.

From Inside retails for $24.95 and will ship in January.

Dakin & Elliott's Mr Night!

BRITISH creators Glenn Dakin and Phil Elliott are the creators behind a new Slave Labor Graphics series starting in February.

Mr. Night, the character who first appeared in the Slave Labor one-shot **Mr. Day/Mr. Night**, is a resident of the dark who begins to fear night time and then, against his friends' warnings, falls in love.

Eventually, after disappearing in the middle of conversations with people, something happens. Mr Night exclaims that we should *all* abandon our pursuit of happiness.

Mr Night #1 is a 32 page black and white comic with colour covers which will retail for $2.95.

IN BRIEF

Voyager: the comic

MALIBU Comics has announced the debut of a new *Star Trek* comics series based on the forthcoming *Star Trek: Voyager* Paramount TV series.

Malibu will release **Star Trek: Voyager A** and **B** as a two-part adaptation of the two-hour pilot episode, while the regular monthly title begins in February with **Star Trek: Voyager** #1.

Several **Star Trek** comics veterans have been lined up for the new series, including Mike Barr, Mark Altman, Charles Marshall, Rob Davis and Terry Pallot.

The new series is an achievement for artist Rob Davis who will become the first creator to have worked on all four series of the comic. He drew **Star Trek** and **Star Trek: The Next Generation** for DC and is artist for **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** for Malibu.

The **Star Trek: Voyager** comics series will directly relate to the television series, which will, for the first time in the 28 year history of *Star Trek*, feature a female captain of a starship.

Voyager, the TV series, will tell the story of Captain Kathryn Janeway and her motley starship crew desperately trying to find a shortcut back to federation space after a freak accident transports them to the far reaches of the galaxy, a place which defies the current laws of physics.

Mitefall saga

ALAN GRANT and Kevin O'Neill team up once again for a new Batmite special.

Batman: Mitefall is a 48 page one-shot which couples Bat-Mite with his reluctant friend Bob Overdog in a desperate battle to stop Bane-Mite, a villain who has already beaten the Justice Mites, Bizarro-Mite and the Vertigo-Mites.

Retailing for $4.95, **Batman: Mitefall** ships on January 24th.

Second Hitchhiker

ARTHUR Dent and Ford Prefect return to comics with the adaptation of Douglas Adams' second novel, **The Restaurant at the End of the Universe**.

The three-issue series will, like the **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** series, be written by John Carnell, who again teams up with Steve Leialoha as artist. Shepherd Hendrix, recently assisting Bernie Wrightson, is the series' inker.

The first issue ships on January 17th and retails for $5.95.

Medieval Superman

LONGTIME DC artist José Luis García-Lopéz returns to comics for his first work since the disappointing **Twilight** mini-series in 1991.

The veteran artist is also collaborating with Dave Gibbons on a **Superman** *Elseworlds* graphic novel, **Superman: Kal**.

This 64 page prestige format title looks at what would have happened had Superman landed as an infant in Medieval England.

Coincidentally, García-Lopéz's last Superman story, for **DC Comics Presents** in 1986, was a pre-**Crisis on Infinite Earths** story which, like the current one, concerned a Superman from another reality.

Birthday girl

IN THE 1990 mini-series **Give Me Liberty**, comic fans witnessed the birth of the Frank Miller and Dave Gibbons created character, Martha Washington. In the comic, the heroine was born on March 11th, 1995 and, as that date fast approaches, Miller and Gibbons have collaborated once again with colourist Angus McKie for a one-shot special featuring Martha.

Happy Birthday, Martha Washington features full-coloured reprints of the two rare Martha Washington appearances from **DHP Fifth Anniversary Special** and **San Diego ComiCon Comics #2**, as well as an all new story in which Martha meets America's greatest living hero, a patriotic figure who has stood for justice since World War II. The one-shot ships on March 7th and will retail for $2.95.

Shirow's new series

THE Ghost in the Shell is a new eight-issue manga mini-series from leading Japanese writer/artist Masamune Shirow, creator of **Appleseed**, **Black Magic** and **Dominion: Tank Police**.

The series tells the story of Major Kusanagi and her crack team of Internal Affairs operatives and how they deal with a number of government-created problems despite the continued threat of unemployment from their masters.

The 48 page $3.95 prestige format part colour comic ships March 7th.

MAJOR DIGRESSIONS

Xerox Hour: the end of the X-Men?

Peter David, writer of comics, paperbacks, film scripts and stuff, contributes a weekly column, "But I Digress" to US trade paper ***The Comic Buyer's Guide****. In addition to appearing monthly in* ***Comics International****, his columns have been compiled by Krause Publications into a 258 page paperback, now available in all good comic shops.*

MARVEL wants us to know that its plans for the mutant titles in 1995 (which involve a murderer disrupting the fabric of time and causing bizarre shifts in reality) is not at all a copy of **Zero Hour** (which involved a murderer disrupting the fabric of time and causing bizarre shifts in reality).

In a way, Marvel is correct. It's not **Zero Hour** precisely. First, it's got "Xs" in it. (**X-Posse? Factor-X?** Please X-cuse me while I X-pectorate.)

Second, **Zero Hour** is itself a copy of something else in turn. Which would make this latest X-citing development a copy of a copy of a copy. No, not X-actly **Zero Hour**.

More like **Xerox Hour**.

What are the events that have led us to **Xerox Hour**.

Well, in the beginning, there was **Crisis on Earth-One** and **Crisis on Earth-Two**.

It's kinda downhill from there.

Back in the 1960s, DC was busy giving readers the new Flash, new Green Lantern, etc. (One wishes there had been computer bulletin boards back then. Just imagine the threader headings: "Hal Jordan Must Die!" "Barry Allen Must Die!" And just think: if angry users had waited 30 years, they'd have had it their way. But I digress.)

Fans at the time wanted to know happened to the original Justice Society of America. The precedent had been set, after all, when upstart Flash Barry Allen had met original Flash Jay Garrick in *Flash of Two Worlds*. If Jay was still up and running (so to speak), where were the other guys?

So, lo and behold, in August and September 1963, **Justice League of America** #21 and #22 contained comics' first multi-part, inter-universe, inter-reality crossover. It wasn't polybagged, up-priced, cover enhanced, renumbered, or set off by itself in a pocket reality. It was simply there: an entertaining two-parter that gave fans exactly what they wanted. And a good time was had by all.

Flash forward (so to speak) 20 years.

Crisis stories had become an end unto themselves — no longer so much because the fans had demanded it (always a dangerous editorial move). And the nice, tidy, parallel Earths explanation which had facilitated *Flash of Two Worlds* had grown into something of a monster.

The DC universe was lousy with Earths. It required an off-putting amount of explanation for any newcomer. And it served to undermine any reason to care about what was going on in "our Earth."

This begat **Crisis on Infinite Earths**. Twelve issues were required to sort out the mess and narrow the DC universe to one Earth. From the end of **Crisis**, the newer, friendlier DC universe was supposed to commence.

Except no-one could quite figure out what that was.

The result was different versions of characters co-existing with no explanation. The "Stitch in time" of **Crisis** had, instead of saving time, necessitated nine more.

Or — to be precise — five more: the five issues of **Zero Hour**. Plus a month's worth of **Zero** issues, guaranteed to botch up comics filing systems everywhere. (Wouldn't it have been neat if, the following month, the next issue had been #-1, followed by #-2, and so on?)

So **Zero Hour** was created to clean up the mess left by **Crisis**, which in turn was developed to mop up after 20 years' worth of being flooded with multiple Earths.

Which brings us to **X-Men**.

Once upon a time, there was one X-title. Just one. Hard to believe, I know. The stories were sophisticated and complex but fairly clear.

Now there's — what? Ten? Eleven? Some with different casts, some with overlapping casts, with good guys indistinguishable from bad guys (because they pretty much talk the same, act the same, and change places on respective teams as frequently as we mere mortals change socks.) There are people from a variety of alternate futures which may or may not be alternate futures, and the people may or may not be related to one another.

As all Gaul could be divided into three parts, so, too, can **X-Men** readers, likewise, split into three general types:

1. Those who can keep all the continuity straight and are proud of it.

2. Those who cannot keep the continuity straight but are continuing with the various titles in hopes that they'll figure it out. (In some instances, such readers are fearful to drop a title, because there's no going back; they can barely remember who's who now, and, if they change their mind six months later and want to get back into it — there's no way.)

3. Those who are looking for an excuse to give up the mutant titles altogether, because their tolerance level has been reached.

Notice that the above scenario doesn't really leave room for newcomers to the mutant comic books. There's a reason for that. Anyone coming in cold faces a prodigious task. Many X-characters blend into one another for me, and I *wrote* one of the damned things.

Hell, I had newcomers to **Incredible Hulk** asking who the Pantheon was, and that's only half a dozen characters. Can you imagine trying to understand the convoluted interrelationships of mutant mania?

Fans prompted to check out the comics as a consequence of the animated series are far more likely to buy **X-Men Adventures**, or even **Classic X-Men**, than they are to try to make the mental (not to mention financial) investment in the X-titles.

And Marvel faces other problems. Over the past year, fans and retailers alike have been voicing annoyance over various Marvel marketing decisions. Decisions ostensibly are made to elicit information from the marketplace, yet the market feels as if it's just being taken for a ride.

Marvel Mart has been well- (if not over-) documented. But then Marvel announced that it would "experiment" with two versions of the X-titles: $1.95, followed two weeks later by $1.50. Audience response will decide which will become the permanent format.

If Marvel wants to change formats and raise prices, that's fine. But let's not kid a kidder. Readers want to know what's happening *now*, not two weeks from now. They'll buy the $1.95 version, because it's there. I know it, you know it, everybody knows it — so if Marvel claims not to know it, either Marvel is disingenuous or just thick as a brick.

One fan pointed out that if Marvel wanted a *genuine* experiment, unprecedented in this marketplace, the $1.50 titles would be published first, with the up-priced version two weeks later. *That* would be a genuine experiment. Perhaps Marvel doesn't want to know how that one would turn out.

Then there's the great Marvel survey, in which readers' opinions were solicited in a recent spate of issues.

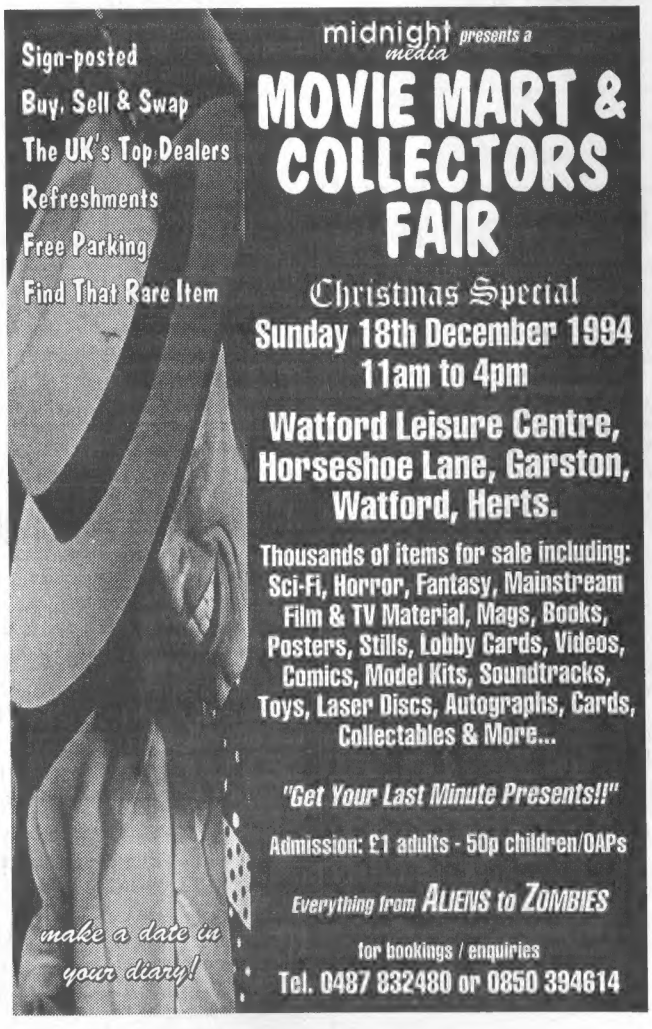
Now — I've received the occasional survey that was accompanied by a dollar or two, as an inducement for me to respond. Usually works, too. But Marvel's put an interesting twist on it with the "First Annual Marvel Survey". To wit:

"Carefully...place [the survey] in an envelope with payment of $2 to cover the cost of processing your survey and shipping you your *free* items." The *free* items (emphasis theirs) are a poster, newsletter, and the results. Hey, Marvel Survey, here's a news flash: if people have to send $2 to get something, then as far as they're concerned, *it's not free* (emphasis mine).

One looks at moves like this and is put in mind of Casey Stengels shouting at the hapless Mets, "Can't anybody here play this game?"

So into this skewed marketplace rolls **Xerox Hour**.

The comparison to **Zero Hour** come not so much from story specifics, but rather because Marvel seems to be trying to deal with particular problems similar to those which spawned DC's various continuity-cleansing efforts. Toss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continuity into the air, see what adheres to the ceiling, and that's what you stick with.

And Marvel has to do something to get people talking, if the company has any intention of drawing in new readership. There's a problem with old readership: The readers leave. Sooner or later, from boredom, economics, or death, they eventually will go away. A comic-book line needs new readers.

DC has managed to reinvent itself by breathing life into its icons and producing other comics geared towards fans who want stories that are overwhelmingly intellectual (ie., incomprehensible).

Then there's Image, picking up the younger fans who might view DC or Marvel as too much akin to their father's Oldsmobile.

Meantime, Marvel has made tremendous strides in television and ancillary merchandise. But merchandise ain't comics.

When I first saw the press release for **Xerox Hour**, my immediate thought was that this was going to last precisely four months: a decision that smacked of marketing savvy rather than creative concerns. Four months would be just long enough for all four issues to be solicited before the first issues would come out: a minimal amount of time to keep the X-titles out of commission but the maximum amount of time to milk the new line of comics.

I learned shortly thereafter that, indeed, this was a four-month gig. Crossovers through the mutant titles are nothing new, heaven knows, but Marvel has come up with a new wrinkle: a title-wide crossover that, like the cheese, stands alone.

There are two problems that come to mind: one creative, one business.

The entire storyline hinges on the death of Charles Xavier changing the future. But in past Marvel stories, such actions have resulted in alternate universes, not variations in already-established continuity.

So either the Marvel editorial braintrust is unaware of this, and continuity is shot — or else (more likely, is my guess) **Mutants**, **Uncanny Mutants**, et al., are in a different universe.

Of course, there could be an intersection between "real" and "imaginary" timelines. Heck, I've done a couple of stories like that myself: **Future Imperfect** comes to mind, and a *Star Trek* novel or two. (And if there is some shakedown, some impact in the "real" Marvel universe as a consequence **Xerox Hour**, I would not be at all surprised, if the result is a line of titles that bear a stronger resemblance to the animated series: a simpler, gentler, more accessible mutant universe — which, let's face it, ain't exactly a bad thing.)

But I cannot help but consider that **Future Imperfect** costs $12 and the Trek hardcovers cost $20 each (less in most stores).

Xerox Hour is eight monthly titles. Four months. 32 issues at about $2 a pop. That's $64 for what could turn out to be a **What If...?** with a hyperactive thyroid.

Which brings us to the business problem: *how the hell do retailers order this thing?*

Let's take **Mutants** #1, which is the nominal replacement title for **X-Men**. You're a retailer. Do you order it the way you'd order that month's regular issue of **X-Men**? Do you order it the way you order an **X-Men** #1 (or, for better or worse, the way you *wish* you'd ordered it)?

You treat it like a limited series and go for numbers similar to — say — the **Cable** limited series? Except it's not really analogous — is it? — because Cable was a known quantity. But these aren't the "real" X-Men, and for all you know they'll be vapour mist in four months.

Actually, ordering #1 is a cakewalk to #2. Do you order that as you would a #2: cut the orders by a third or more? Or do you go for numbers similar to what you would have ordered for **X-Men** that month?

Good Lord, what about **X-Calibre**? Do you order that along the less-than-sterling numbers of **Excalibur** or go for numbers similar to **Mutants**, in the hopes that readers will buy into the whole shebang?

Looking to me for answers?

I regret to inform you that I have no dazzling insight, no inside information. I do not envy retailers their task here nor Marvel's, for that matter.

This is a company (which has not engendered retailer affections lately) asking for a major leap of faith. How many retailers are likely to feel as if they're bungee jumping with frayed cords?

My guess?

A significant amount of buzz will be generated by **Xerox Hour**, so that the new titles will sell fairly strongly across the board — higher than the corresponding X-titles would have sold in some cases. However, orders on other Marvel titles are probably going to suck ditchwater to make up for it — and if that happens, the all important bottom line would be unaffected.

In fact, it could conceivably hurt in the long run. Because if people who were buying the X-titles decided to skip the entire **Xerox Hour**, then that gives them four months to break the habit.

And once a habit has been dropped, it's very easy to leave it lying there. Marvel could conceivably be providing marginal fans with the excuse they have been seeking to get out of the mutant titles — and no guarantee that any newcomers will jump on board.

In a way, what Marvel is doing is admirable: no guts, no glory, as they say.

I just wish that — when Marvel goes out on a limb, as it has here — it didn't have to bring so many people out along with it. Because if the limb gets sawn off, we're all going to hear the crash.

© Peter David, 1994

(Peter David, writer of stuff, can be written to at To Be Continued, PO Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705, United States of America. Also, in the future he will be going by his newly chosen Native American name of "Runs With Scissors". More on these major changes as they develop.)

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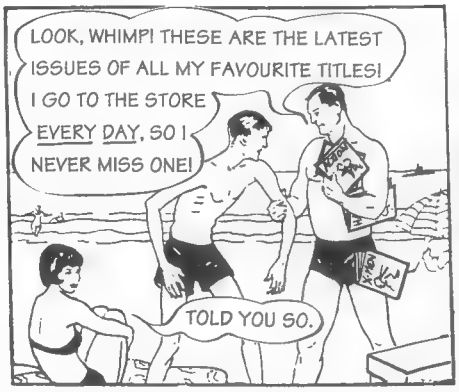

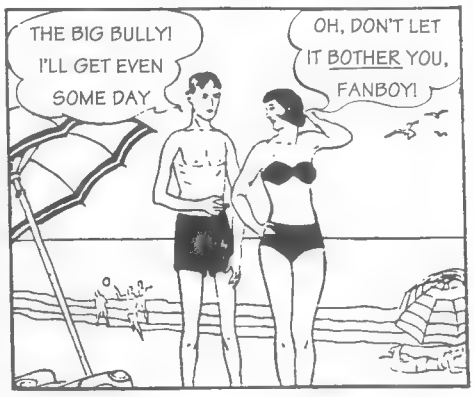

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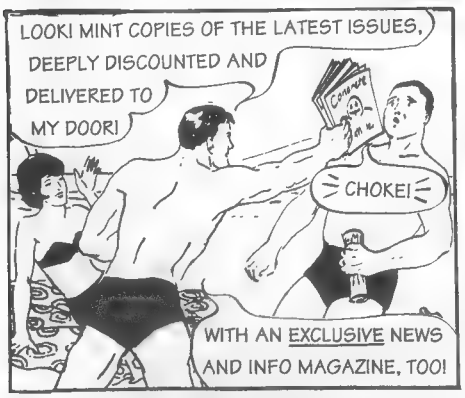
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On the ball with Sweet FA!

OUTSIDE of the currently booming pre-school titles from Redan, Fleetway and BBC Publications, Britain's comics market has noticeably diminished over the last few years.

One-time leaders Fleetway, DC Thomson and Marvel UK have trimmed back their lines to a minimum, with new launches invariably following the lead of television and computer games.

But while mainstream giants appear unwilling to launch new ideas to generate licensing — preferring to be licensees themselves — Feldon Publications has hit on an idea which is so obvious and commercially viable, that other publishers should be kicking themselves for not having thought of it years ago.

Forget Euro-comics, where costings can be amortised across multiple editions, or short-lived tie-ins to children's TV series.

Feldon has taken the biggest comics idea of the last decade and mixed with the country's most popular sport to produce a **Viz**-style soccer humour comic, **Sweet FA!**.

Launched this month at 99p, the 52-page bi-monthly continues in the **Viz** tradition of combining **Beano**-style single page strips with **Private Eye**'s savage humour, creating an end-product guaranteed to amuse even the most ardent non-soccer fan.

With contributors including Lew (**Buster**) Stringer, John (**Sex Warrior**) Erasmus, **Talking Turkey**'s Russ Carvell, **Knockabout**'s Joe Matthews and Davy Francis, the title's 22 strips include *Diego Marijuana (5'6" of banned substances), The Jimmy Greaves Story* and *Kenny "On the Head" Regan.*

At a time when publishers are publicly bemoaning the end of an era of originated ideas, **Sweet FA!** should prove that the comics format is still as viable as ever, and only needs new ideas to challenge any other form of mass entertainment.

IN BRIEF

Funds raised for LCC

A GRAND total of £1,695 has been raised from charity auctions held in aid of the London Cartoon Centre.

Auctions were held at this year's UKCAC and the Caption small press convention in Oxford.

Bulldog's back

THE FOURTH issue of Jason Cobley's self-published comic **Bulldog** is out, priced at £1.00 plus 25p postage. Cobley has announced that there will also be a **Bulldog Special Edition** in the new year, reprinting the well-received *Nippon* storyline in **Bulldog** issues #2 & #3.

Cobley has also announced the publication of a three-issue mini-series, **107**, shipping in the new year.

Both **Bulldog** and **107** are drawn by Kieran MacDonald. Copies of both can be obtained from 33 Willowbank, Fazeley, Tamworth, Staffs B78 3LS.

Auction charity quiz

COMPAL, the comic auction company, will be hosting a charity Christmas quiz in its quarterly auction catalogue.

There will be 10 questions about comics, with prizes of cash to be spent on lots of the winners' choice. The quiz will cost £5 to enter, all of which will be donated to the Great Ormond Street Childrens' Hospital Fund in London.

Entry details can be obtained from Malcolm Phillips, on 071-586 3007.

X-Men UK giveaways

MARVEL UK has announced two cover-mounts for its children's title **X-Men**. The November 25th issue includes a free notebook, and the December 9th edition will feature a cover-mounted badge. The promotion coincides with the launch of the cartoon series on BBC children's TV.

X-Men is published fortnightly and retails for 75p.

Small press spotlight

THE THIRD issue of the reviews magazine, **By-Pass**, has just been published. **By-Pass**, which specialises in small press and self-published titles, reviews new fanzines and strip 'zines free of charge, but asks that any titles sent in should be accompanied by a 36p stamp for a copy of the issue in which they are reviewed.

By-Pass is priced £1.20, inclusive of postage and packing, and can be obtained from Box B, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4.

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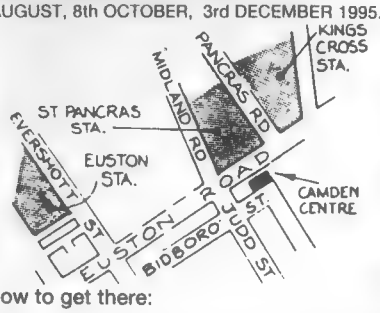

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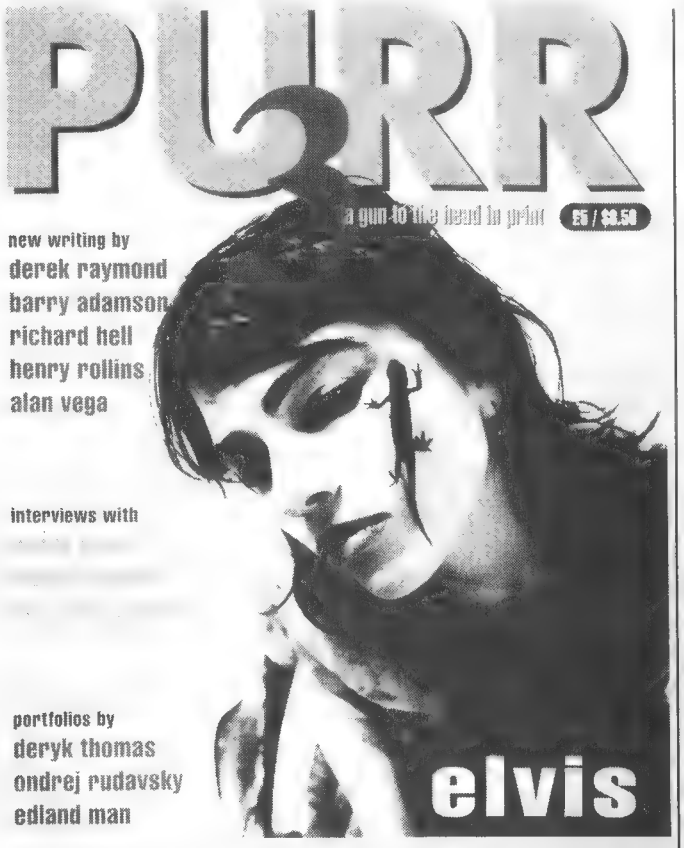

THE THIRD issue of the redesigned ***Purr Quarterly****, published in December, will be a double-sized special with full colour throughout. Contributors include Barry Adamson, Henry Rollins, Alan Vega, Maggie Cheung, Ondrej Rudavsky, Simon Henwood and Dix. Retailing for £5, the 124-page* ***Purr Quarterly*** *#3 will be the last edition in this format. From February 1995, the anthology will be published on a bi-monthly schedule and sold at a reduced price of £3.00.*

IN BRIEF

Not Tardis but terminus

Doctor Who Classic Comic has been cancelled. The last issue, #27, was published on November 10th.

Barbieri's Malice

COMICS International reviewer Fabio P Barbieri is the co-creator of a new three-issue series to be published by Heroic Comics in 1995.

Malice is a story set in Italy during 1934, and Barbieri describes it as a superhero story with mixed elements of historical romance, magic, horror and psychedelia.

The series is co-created and drawn by the experienced Italian artist Franco Urru; the first issue ships in February and will retail for $1.95.

Barbieri's small press series, **Silver Angel**, is now available in a 28-page A6 format. **Athena and the Birth of the Silver Angel** is priced 50p, and can be obtained from Barbieri at 33 Brewster Road, Leyton, London.

A British Image?

A NEW Sheffield-based comics studio has been set up by a former Image artist and local creators.

N Studios is the brainchild of Jonathan Matthewson III, Nigel Raynor and Sam Carlisle, who have established the studio to create a comics universe with a new attitude. The studio also hopes to be involved in television, film and animation.

The company's first comic is **Widow**, which is expected to be scheduled for the new year.

N-Studios can be contacted at Unit 507, The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield S1 2BX.

Competition winners

Comics International's The Comic Book competition provoked a huge response from readers. The correct answers were as follows:

Q. *Who created Superman?*
A. Siegle & Shuster

Q. *In which issue of what comic did the Silver Surfer first appear?*
A. **Fantastic Four** #48

Q. *What was the first Image Comic?*
A. **Youngblood**

Q. *What is the comic with the longest uninterrupted run?*
A. **Detective Comics**

Q. *Who played Robin in the 1989 Tim Burton movie?*
A. Nobody.

Q. *What publisher launched* ***Turok Son of Stone****?*
A. Dell Comics

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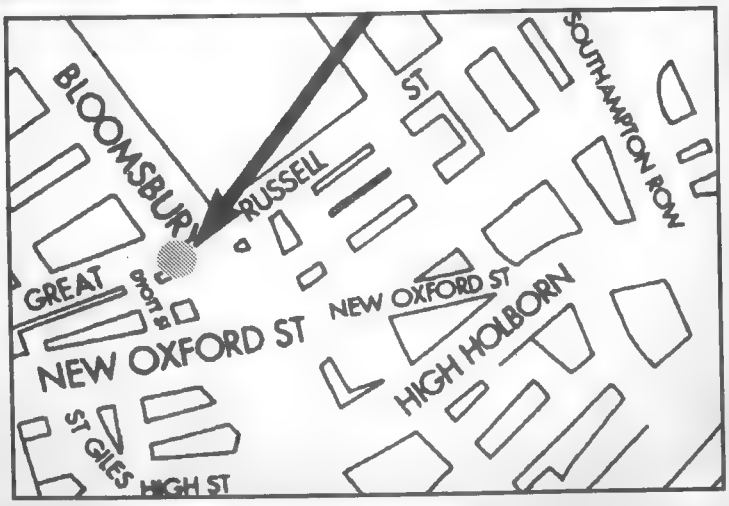

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Your chance to win a free copy of the new £8.99 96 page paperback **The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr Punch** by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean.

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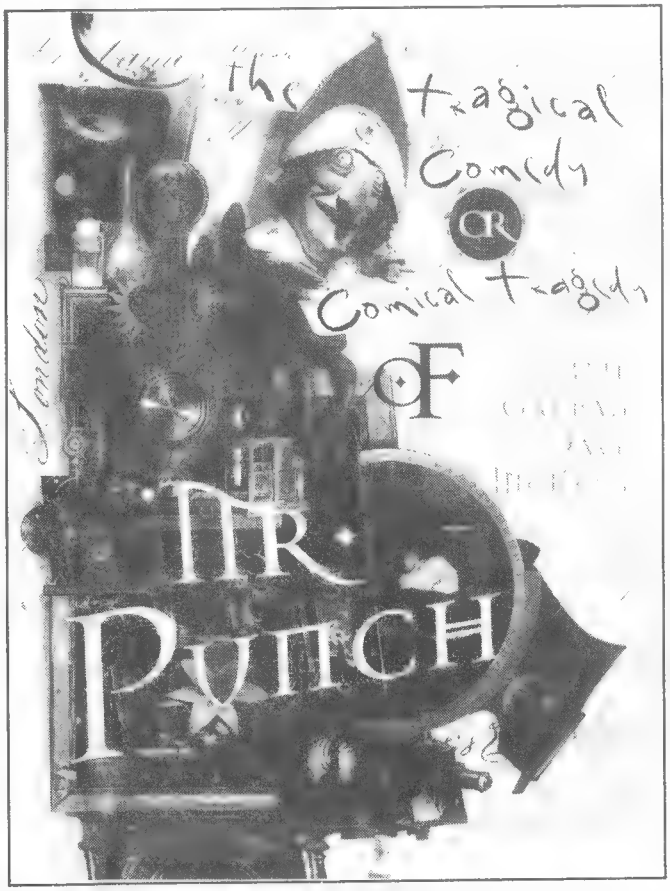
"And Mister Punch still lives — to travel up and down the countryside, amusing and delighting both old and young."



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The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr Punch is written by Neil Gaiman, the award-winning author of **The Sandman, Signal To Noise** and **Violent Cases.** It has been designed and illustrated by Dave McKean, award-winning artist of **Arkham Asylum** and **Signal To Noise.**

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(iii) Cages is written and drawn by who?

(iv) What series have Neil Gaiman and Michael Zulli just finished for Marvel?

(v) What reptile features in a Punch and Judy show?

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MEDIAFILE

Associate editor Sarah Bolesworth looks at recent media coverage of comics and related product

IN THE press release which announces the buyout of Malibu Comics by Marvel Entertainment Group on November 3, Malibu's president, Scott Rosenberg, enthused (as well he might) about "Marvel's financial and marketing muscle".

Along with the press announcement came assurances that Malibu Comics "will continue to operate autonomously".

But if Rosenberg is excited about Marvel's financial and marketing muscle, that means that Malibu will be flexing that same muscle to get its product onto the market. In other words, Malibu will, in the future, be using Marvel money and marketing resources to sell comics.

But what does this word *autonomous* actually mean when it appears in the same press release as the following: "Malibu will report directly to Mr Stewart [Terry Stewart, president and chief operating officer, Marvel Comics] through Mr Rosenberg, who will become senior executive vice president of Marvel Comics".

In reality *autonomous* means "self-governing" — sounds good as a concept, but as Marvel's press release clearly points out, autonomous only *means* autonomous when it doesn't mean something else. In this case, it appears to mean that Marvel's buyout of the reportedly financially troubled West Coast independent (it had to be on the market for Marvel to buy) is *not* a potential asset-stripping exercise.

And if it were — but we understand from Marvel's press release of course that it isn't — there is no doubt that Malibu has some assets to strip. The in-house computerised colouring system the Californian comics studio has developed offers a potentially huge saving as far as payments to colourists are concerned, and has proved popular with the punters.

Reports in **The Wall Street Journal** and **Daily Variety** (3.11.'94) indicated that, beyond the rationalised colouring technology Malibu offers, the fact that the studio is based on the West Coast is a major pull — and "will facilitate Marvel's launch of other, differentiated publishing programmes based on the West Coast," — is a clear indication that the studio itself won't be autonomous for very long. Instead of handling Malibu creators' product, the studio will — possibly very soon — be asked to work on Marvel product. And how great a proportion of the overall output of the studio does that have to be before Malibu's "autonomy" is prejudiced?

"What are words, words?"

"Consolidation" and "rationalisation" are the most commonly used euphemisms on this side of the pond for what's likely to happen to Malibu next — and those words usually mean making great tranches of staff redundant because their roles are duplicated elsewhere in the parent organisation — in this case, within Marvel Comics or Marvel Entertainment. Administrative and accounts departments are likely to go first, with middle management following a close second.

The notion that Marvel wants to get close to West Coast creators, and intends to do so through the good offices of Malibu Comics is, even in a territory the size of the US, quaint. A company of Marvel's capacity can get close to anybody it feels like getting close to. What Marvel Entertainment is much more likely to be interested in is the potential tie-in with the sophisticated Malibu consumer profile.

Marvel has recently gained a firm grip on the younger end of the market (9 to 16 year olds), particularly through properties like the X-Men titles and TV series. But the more sophisticated, older market has remained until now the province of DC Comics — and increasingly so with the advent of the Vertigo line. The older reader, the 16 to 24-year-old, has much more disposable wealth, and unit profits are likely to be far higher than those in the younger market. Malibu product has proved popular with older readers, and is particularly suitable for TV or film adaptation. Retaining Malibu's distinct identity is a way of retaining consumer loyalty to the original "brand", that is, Malibu Comics.

The cost and profit advantages in this buyout work in Marvel's favour; nobody yet knows what the financial deal behind this buyout is, and Malibu's future as a genuinely autonomous entity looks improbable. What *is* likely is that Malibu will simply become one of the production families detailed under Marvel Comics' revised editorial structure (see *News America*, this issue, page 2).

But one thing's for sure. Malibu's success with licensed product — selling its characters through (at least notionally) to the TV networks and to LA film producers is something that Marvel must be pleased to be associated with, in whatever capacity. As reported in **Variety**, "Marvel's purchase of Malibu will not affect the status of Malibu's pre-existing deals around Hollywood, such as the company's pact with Columbia Pictures".

Trapped in what **Variety** calls a "web of litigation" relating to the development and exploitation of film properties, Marvel needs another avenue for licensed products — and, of course, Malibu is located conveniently close to Hollywood itself.

Comics' T&A agenda

Two new products focusing on women this month: the second issue of **Girlfrenzy**, featuring work by creative alumni Suzy Varty, Kate Charlesworth, Carolyn Ridsdale and Lee "Addictive Personality" Kennedy. **Girlfrenzy** is available from PO Box 148, Hove BN3 3DR (#2.00, including post and packaging).

Meanwhile, T&A — a cute, antiquated expression used by members of the British media establishment when they want to talk about soft porn — is firmly back on the agenda in British comics.

David Bishop, editor of Fleetway's **Judge Dredd: The Megazine**, judged the time right to package a **Femmes Fatale** supplement with the October 14 issue of the fortnightly **2000AD** spin-off.

Bishop's blustering blurb in the **Megazine** (— "politically correct, us?" — what does that have to do with publishing a soft porn pin-up supplement. Surely it speaks for itself?), introduced **Femmes Fatale**. David has obviously been looking at the new wankers' charter, IPC Magazines' **Loaded**, a lads' magazine that's not afraid of showing a bit of tits and ass. **Loaded** has proved remarkably successful, and David obviously hopes that he can mine the same semen — *sorry*, seam. Trouble is, despite being a wank-mag, **Loaded** is intelligent and well produced. Which is more than can be said for **Femmes Fatale** (surely Femmes Fatales?). With its low-rent rip-offs (some art obviously copied from well-known photos) and poor production, **Femmes Fatale** will no doubt cause a spurt in sales (sorry), but also places **The Megazine** firmly in **Knave**'s top shelf territory, where it could be lost for ever. And that would be a shame.

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As to the death of Spiderman.....well we think thats what the man said...but then again,who knows for sure .....

COMICWATCH

OVER the last few years, *ComicWatch* has run regular reports on sales and buying trends. Representing 10% of the UK total, comics retailers from across Britain have contributed their views on a variety of subjects.

Featuring the results of our final 1994 survey, this issue we present retailers thoughts on topics **Comics International** has covered in the last 12 months and how 1994 has been for specialist retail compared to previous years.

compiled by Phil Hall

On the industry's major launch of 1994: Defiant Comics

1994 was to have been the year that Jim Shooter proved himself to be one of the most influential comics creators. Unfortunately his Defiant Comics became just another casualty in the market, despite many people having put their trust in Defiant as a major new force in the industry.

Now that they're gone, we asked retailers what sort of impact did Shooter's new company have and whether Defiant was a good idea in the first place.

ACE Comics *' Martin Beeson:* "No impact! Not a good idea at the time."

Arcadia Comics' *Ron Castree:* "No impact with very low sales. A good idea — but not soundly researched."

Avalon Comics' *Mark Perry:* "The impact the Defiant line had was negligible. The premise initially was good and customer orders and hopes were very high, but what with the farce that was the **Plasm Binder**, customers cancelled their orders in droves and who can blame them — who wants a second print of a product that has only just hit the stands."

Demon Comics's *Paul Bentley* "Too much rehashing of old Valiant ideas."

The Edge of Forever's *Mike Conroy:* "No impact! An interesting failure. Unfortunately, what was offered wasn't delivered."

Imagination Station's *Tommy Hoodless:* "It had very little impact. It could have been a good idea, if they hadn't screwed us with the trading card comics."

Incognito's *Dave Finn:* "No impact! New companies are a good idea. Defiant was just lousy."

Negative Zone's *Terry Gay:* "Very little response after the first **Plasm** issue, Valiant Comics success must have been due to the efforts of Barry Windsor-Smith and Bob Layton and not Jim Shooter!"

Nu.Earth's *Mike Reid:* "Defiant was crap! Valiant, Ultraverse and Defiant make me very wary of new indie publishers."

Planet Eater's *Ron Hall:* "You wouldn't print it if I told you!"

Red Hot Comics' *Ivor Davis:* "Latterly, only two customers ordered all the titles. Yes, it was a good idea, but it all went downhill after the **Plasm Album** debacle. People seemed to *boycott* Defiant after this!"

Skinny Melink's *Bruce Paley:* "No impact whatsoever! At the end we were selling one or none of each Defiant title. Valiant is just as bad!"

They Walk Among Us' *Jon Browne:* "Very little impact at all. What idea?"

Timezone's *Paul Martin:* "Total marketing rip-off. Nil sales base. This became standing-order-only prior to its collapse."

Westside Comics' *Phil Logie:* "I have a lot of Defiant comics in my overstock boxes with about two Defiant customers. Bad idea!"

Whatever Comics' *Maney Amario:* "Defiant was a good idea. However, if I had been Shooter, I would have waited for Valiant to fall flat on their faces, which they have, then launched Defiant to fill the void. It was a case of too much too soon, and the comics weren't that good."

Wonderworld's *Dave Hern:* "No impact — bad idea and lousy timing."

Worlds Apart's *Sashya Maloney:* "Most customers completely ignored Defiant, the whole line seemed to be an exercise in bitterness."

Retailer thoughts on 1995

1994 has possibly been one of the low points in the history of American comics. During the year we have seen the demise of many publishers:Defiant, Triumphant, Eclipse, Blackball, Continuity, etc. There have also been a number of creator deaths giving the industry pause for sorrow and an opportunity to reflect. There has also been a marked decline in the sales of new comic books — 12 months ago ***Spawn*** *was selling nearly twice the amount of copies it sells now and it is still the top selling solo superhero comic on the market! 1994 was a time when retailers seriously had to consider what comics they should* ***not*** *be buying. We asked retailers what they expect during 1995.*

American Comics Enterprise's *Martin Beeson:* "A further contraction of titles. Consolidating on well written ones. A modest increase on overall takings."

Arcadia Comics' *Ron Castree:* "More publishers closing down. More UK retailers going. Price hikes from distributors — hey! Business as usual!"

Avalon Comics' *Mark Perry:* "What with the speculator market finally burning itself out, hopefully we'll find an industry that is gearing itself to focus more on quality rather than quantity."

Beyond Comics & Books' *Robert Baldwin:* "Sorry to say, but not a lot."

Comics Unlimited's *Warren Gillham:* "Much the same as 1994."

Demon Comic's *Paul Bentley* "Rob Liefeld to quit the business."

The Edge of Forever's *Mike Conroy:* "More of the same! Too much product — not enough quality."

Imagination Station's *Tommy Hoodless:* "More deluxe editions from Marvel (because we demanded them ?) plus more titles we don't need."

Incognito's *Dave Finn:* "Large increases in new comics prices. Too much shareholder control from Marvel & DC. The need to make money superceding creative control and input."

Negative Zone's *Terry Gay:* "Several more of the smaller publishers are likely to cease trading."

Nu-Earth's *Mike Reid:* "Comics industry to go 'belly up', either a general contraction or the whole market."

Planet Eater's *Ron Hall:* "Yet more special covers and hype. Perhaps three of each title, newsstand/deluxe and ultimate! I see a light, a normal cover? No, I'm mistaken."

Red Hot Comics' *Ivor Davis:* "1) Steady sales growth. 2) Increased customer base. 3) More price hikes from Marvel and DC. 4) To be a year older and wiser."

Skinny Melink's *Bruce Paley:* "Back issue sales to increase as we've lowered our prices. I think others will surely follow suit."

They Walk Among Us' *Jon Browne:* "Consolidation and steady growth — ever increasing cross media promotion (good!)."

Timezone's *Paul Bentley:* "Normal cover price to increase to $1.95 across the board."

Westside Comics' *Phil Logie:* "Even lower sales in new imports (ie. I'll only be ordering dead cert sellers, I can't afford to take any more new product)."

Whatever Comics' *Maney Amario:* "Difficult to say. 1994 has not been a good year for the industry. Things can only get better, we hope."

Wonderworld's *Dave Hern:* "A stabilised, gradually recovering market. Fewer new comics shops as people realise there is no "bandwagon" to jump on."

Worlds Apart's *Sashya Maloney:* "Hopefully a cutting away of deadwood lines like Malibu, Valiant and Dark Horse hero comics."

What would retailers do to improve the market in 1995?

In our questionnaire to retailers, we asked what they would do to improve the current Direct Sales market and comics in general if they had the chance.

ACE Comics' *Martin Beeson:* "Advertise outside of our normal market space."

Arcadia Comics' *Ron Castree:* "Publishers/distributors to put their money where their collective mouths are and offer product sale or return."

Avalon Comics' *Mark Perry:* "What we're really lacking at the moment is any kind

HOW COMICS FEATURE MAGAZINES SELL IN UK SPECIALIST SHOPS

Retailer	*Wizard*	*Hero*	*Comic World*	*Overstreet*	*Comicbook Collector*	*Comic Values*	*Comics Scene*	*Diamond Previews*	*Advance Comics*	*Comic Buyer's Guide*	*Comics International*
ACE	28	10	25	4	3	3	3	105	-	7	150
Arcadia	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	55
Avalon	32	12	2	1	-	-	-	55	-	2	80
Comics Unlimited	40	5	5	1	-	-	-	20	-	-	40
Demon Comics	35	18	1	-	-	1	5	35	-	-	35
Edge of Forever	22	15	6	4	2	3	4	85	-	3	300
Imagination Stn	8	6	-	2	-	-	1	25	-	2	50
Incognito	10	8	6	3	-	-	4	18	-	2	75
Negative Zone	7	6	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	75
Nu-Earth	30	20	10	-	-	-	2	200	-	-	50
Planet Eater	6	4	2	2	-	-	-	120	-	3	50
Skinny Melink	20	8	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	2	60
They Walk Among Us	30	12	4	5	-	-	2	40	-	2	60
TimeZone	30	10	3	4	-	-	-	70	-	-	65
Westside	15	2	-	1	1	1	-	20	-	1	35
Whatever	10	5	2	2	-	-	-	20	-	-	60
Wonderworld	12	10	3	-	-	-	-	5	50	-	300
Worlds Apart	40	20	-	3	-	-	-	60	-	-	120
Totals	380	171	69	32	6	8	21	920	50	24	1,675

Included on our list were the UK's **Comics (Speculator) News** and the US's **Comics Advisor**, but both titles were not carried by any of the retailers surveyed.

of decent re-order system, so a step in that direction would be a good thing."

Beyond Comics & Books' *Robert Baldwin:* "Cut back on the rubbish comics and stick to the old ways."

Demon Comics' *Paul Bentley:* "Cancellation of low selling titles by the main publishers and a consolidation and expansion of families."

The Edge of Forever's *Mike Conroy:* "Promote comics as a medium to the general public. Expand beyond the superhero genre without going "off the wall" and concentrate on quality story telling."

Imagination Station's *Tommy Hoodless:* "Concentrate on quality books and get rid of poor comics cluttering up the marketplace."

Incognito's *Dave Finn:* "Improve retailer solidarity. Keep comics non-returnable — returnability allows large chain stores to compete with smaller retailers."

Negative Zone's *Terry Gay:* "Less multi-part crossovers and more information when they do!"

Nu-Earth's *Mike Reid:* "Cut down on output, more quality!"

Red Hot Comics' *Ivor Davis:* "Reduce some comic book prices, produce more material for younger children, promote a comicbook month or week and persuade Diamond to import "not available" product."

Skinny Melink's *Bruce Paley:* "Less product and better quality — Marvel appears to be doing that lately, ie. **Generation X.**"

They Walk Among Us' *Jon Browne:* "Promote Dark Horse and humiliate the speculators."

Westside Comics' *Phil Logie:* "Increase interest in back issue sales to improve retailers' profit margins, thus allowing more capital for new product."

Whatever Comics' *Maney Amario:* "Tekno has made a bold move in making first issues returnable, perhaps other publishers should take note."

Wonderworld's *Dave Hern:* "Publishers need less gimmicks and so on (Marvel's two editions, for example) and more reliable, good quality stories.

Worlds Apart's *Sashya Maloney:* "Improve returnability of current comics. Someone should set up a back issue wholesaler like in the States."

The general consensus from our panel of retailers is a call for better quality comics, which they feel will turn into good sellers and the constant call for returnable comics. Tekno Comix's decision to allow returns on all of their first issues has been applauded by retailers on both sides of the Atlantic. However, Sven Larsen of Marvel and Bob Wayne of DC both categorically restated at this year's UKCAC that if Marvel or DC have enough faith in a new launch, they see no reason to make it returnable, quoting that the discounts would be affected and would fall dramatically. Many retailers who still struggle to get their new comics orders accurate will be hoping that Tekno Comix's returns policy will help the company succeed during 1995, perhaps inciting other publishers to follow.

What were the top selling publishers for retailers in '94?

We asked the 10% of the total UK retail base to list the publishers which have been most successful for them during 1994. We asked them to list the publishers in order of popularity, scoring 4 points for their top selection, 3 points for their second and so on. If the retailer placed two publishers equally, then the combined scores of the positions were added together and halved.

Marvel Comics	68½ points
DC Comics	63½ points
Image	32½ points
Dark Horse	25½ points
Viz Communications	3½ points
Malibu	3 points
Bongo	1½ points
Valiant	1 point
Small press	1 point

General overview

We asked whether back issue sales had increased, decreased or stayed the same in the last twelve months...

Up ..... 35% **Down** ..... 35% **Same** 30%

We asked "Have you increased your range outside of comics?"

Yes ..... 95% **No** 5%

On trading cards, were they stocking more or less?

More ..... 85% **Less** 15%

On videos, were they stocking mopre or less?

More ..... 85% **Less** 15%

We asked retailers if they worked to a budget when ordering new comics.

Yes ..... 25% **No** .... 55% **Sometimes** 20%

Do retailers think that the latest big industry launch, Tekno Comix, will succeed where others have failed?

Will succeed ..... 50% **Won't succeed** 50%

We then asked how many would carry Tekno product.

Would ..... 95% **Wouldn't** 5%

We also asked about ordering new titles. What specifically does the retailer do when ordering new product? Do they:

Cut back on other titles to accommodate?	45%
Order irrespective of the cost?	35%
Do not order anything but mainstream titles	20%

SCOTT DUNBIER

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b&w = black & white content
pc = part-colour content
hbk = hardback (book) edition
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Xpg = number of interior pages
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Cerebus 190 (Sim & Gerhard) 2.25

AC COMICS

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Aliens/Predator: Deadliest of the Species 9 (Claremont & Barreto) Delacroix and the Hunters have one way out of the hive, and it leads straight through the centre of the aliens' stronghold. $2.50

Sin City: The Big Fat Kill 2 (Miller) Dwight and his girls have five dead cops on their hands and a growing mob war outside their door. Mature readers. $2.95

The Machine 2 (Arcudi & Naifeh) The cybernetic hero battles for his continued existence. $2.50

NEW **Star Wars: Dark Empire II #1** (Veitch & Kennedy) Follow-up series to the critically acclaimed series of 1992. ... $2.95

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NEW **The Torch of Liberty Special** (Byrne & Dwyer) One-shot featuring Byrne's version own patriotic hero $2.50

X 10 (Grant & Warner + Bradstreet) X faces the Judgement Knights and discovers that he may not be the

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DC COMICS

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NEW **The Power of Shazam** (Ordway) Softcover edition of the 96pg graphic novel.... $9.95

Black Orchid 18 (Vertigo; Foreman & Toleyson + Woch) Orchid begins to change the very nature of her being. Mature readers. $1.95

Deathstroke, the Hunted 44 (Wolfman & Cariello + Blyberg) Slade Wilson is dead, apparently, and the search begins for his long-lost daughter. Guy Gardner guests. $1.95

NEW **Extreme Justice 1** (Vado & Campos + Branch) In the wake of **Zero Hour**, a new, harder-edged Justice League team makes its debut. $1.50

Flash 98 (Waid & Larocca + Marzan Jr) *Terminal Velocity, Part 4* (of 6). Flash speeds towards a final confrontation with Kobra in the knowledge that he too will die.$1.50

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Legion of Super-Heroes 65 (Waid + McCraw & Moder + Boyd) The Legion is called in following reports of a massive jailbreak on a top security prison planet. $1.95

Mob Fire 3 (Ushaw & Pleece) The Bocor stays one step ahead of Jack Kellor. Mature readers. $2.50

Primal Force 4 (Seagle & Choles + Kaalberg) The team travel to Hong Kong to settle the score with the Silver Dragon. $1.95

Sandman Mystery Theatre 23 (Vertigo; M Wagner + Seagle & Locke) *Dr Death, Part 3* (of 4). The Golden Age Sandman attempts to stop the geriatric genocide taking place in NYC. Mature readers.$1.95

Shade, the Changing Man 56 (Vertigo; Milligan & Buckingham + Bryant) Shade's son is growing at a tremendous rate as the reporter continues digging into Shade's past. Mature readers. $1.95

The Spectre 26 (Ostrander & Mandrake) A Yuletide story with a sinister twist. $1.95

Star Trek 68 (Weistein & Derenick + Starr) Spock tries reasoning with Stonn's rebellious daughter. . $1.95

Superboy 12 (K. Kesel & Grummett + Davis) Superboy has to save Rex Leech from the coils of Copperhead — and also discovers that he has to go to school. $1.50

Superman: The Man of Steel 41 (L Simonson & Bogdanove + Janke) Babe is becoming a real threat to Jimmy Olsen's health, she's a vampire! $1.50

Wonder Woman 94 (Loebs & Deodato Jr) The new Wonder Woman joins forces with Diana Prince to oppose Julia Scazia's attempts to wipe out crime in Boston. $1.50

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The Demon 55 (Ennis & McCrea) Etrigan and Blood take a stand against Golgotha, the infernal offspring of the Demon — but does the Demon *really* want to help? 1.95

Green Lantern 59 (Marz & Banks + Tanghal) Green Lantern's first Christmas in New York looks like a quiet affair until Dr Polaris announces his arrival in Times Square. $1.50

The Guardians of Metropolis 4 (Kesel & Dwyer) The concluding part finds Guardian trying to prevent the forces of Apokolips from gaining the secret of eternal life. $1.50

Hawkman 17 (Messner-Loebs & Lieber + Shoultz) The final secret of Hawkman's rebirth during **Zero Hour** is revealed by an old enemy. $1.95

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Icon 22 (Milestone; Bright + Gustovich) Icon has gone to his home planet leaving a pregnant Rocket as Dakota's sole protector. $1.75

Justice League America 96 (Jones & Green & Pepoy) The death of an old friend may not be as natural as was at first thought. $1.50

Moonshadow 6 (DeMatteis & Williams) Reprinting the Epic series from 1985 in 12 instalments. $1.95

The New Titans 118 (Wolfman & Rosado + Champagne) Psimon is triumphant, and with Raven and the Brotherhood of Evil at his side, is there any hope? $1.95

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Adventures of Superman 520 (K Kesel & Immonen + Marzan) 100 crimes are simultaneously committed by 100 criminals — too many for the Man of Steel to deal with. $1.50

Animal Man 80 (Vertigo; Prosser & Harper + Minor) Animal Man floats in the void without a body. The new creative team takes Buddy Baker into even stranger realms. Mature readers. $1.95

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 68 (DeMatteis & Staton) A revealing look in the psyche of the Joker as Batman returns the psychopath to his old, less than sane ways. $1.95

Blood Syndicate 23 (Milestone; Velez Jr & Chris X & Quijano) Some of the members revert to their pre-Big Bang personas. $1.75

Detective Comics 682 (Dixon & Nolan + Janson) Batman finds Tim Drake's father has a few too many demands to make of him. $1.50/2.50

NEW **Bob, the Galactic Bum 1** (Grant & Wagner + Ezquerra) The adventures of an intersteller drifter and his sidekick. The Khund & REBELS guest. $1.95

Fate 4 (Moore & Williams + Lanning) Fate discovers that Horde has transformed his wife into a dimensional portal. $1.95

Gunfire 9 (Kupperberg & Wozniak) The TV reporter continues his investigation into Gunfire's secret identity. $1.95

Judge Dredd: Legends of the Law 3 (Wagner + Grant & Anderson + Palmiotti) Dredd becomes the latest target of a human body-parts bootlegger. $1.95

Justice League Task Force 20 (Priest & Velluto + Allbrecht) Despero is lost and only Gypsy can save him. $1.50

La Pacifica 2 (of 3; Paradox Press; Rose + Poe & Ozkan) A hotelier involved in a series of bizarre killings. Mature readers. ... $4.95

Legionnaires 22 (Peyer & Moy + Boyd) The Legionnaires must rescue the Legion of Super-Heroes in a story continued from **Legion of Super-Heroes**. $1.50

Outsiders 15 (Barr & Pelletier + Campanella) Both teams face a threat that is tied into the advent of New Year's Eve. $1.95

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Star Trek: The Next Generation 68 (Friedman & Skelton) Ensign Ro is the guest of a mysterious benefactor. $1.95

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SHIPPING JANUARY 3RD

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FANTAGRAPHICS

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Vengeance of Vampirella 98 (Sniegoski & Buzz + Wilson) Vampirella must stop Van Helsing from unleashing something very unpleasant on the world. ... $2.95

IMAGE COMICS

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Xenozoic Tales 13 (Schulz) Schulz's first new story for three years as Jack and Hannah get involved with a great tribal hunter. $2.95

MALIBU

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Hardcase 19 (Ultraverse; Hudnall & Luzniak) Tie-in to the spin-off stand-alone series, **Godwheel**$1.95
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MARVEL COMICS

SHIPPING DECEMBER 6TH

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Cable 20 (Loeb & Churchill) Cable races against the clock to stop Legion altering the past. $1.95
Captain America 436 (Gruenwald & Hoover + Bulanadi) Concluding the *Fighting Chance* storyline, set to determine the identity of the new Captain America. $1.50
Conan Saga 95 (Thomas & Buscema + Chan) b&w $2.25
Daredevil 337 (Wright & Grindberg) Daredevil meets the Kingpin in a final conflict. Guest-stars Blackwulf. $1.50
Darkhawk 48 (Fingeroth & Smith) Darkhawk is recovering from his illness while Portal is up to his elbows in supervillains. $1.50
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Namor 59 (Herdling & Isherwood) The Abomination stars as Namor discovers that this Hulk foe is quite adept at fighting under water. $1.50
Ren & Stimpy 28 (Slott & Kazaleh) Derived from Nickelodeon's animated TV series. $1.95
Spider-Man 2099 #28 (David & St. Pierre) Spidey visits the town of Nightshade to fight Travesty. $1.50
Spider-Man: Friends & Enemies 2 (of 4; Fingeroth & Lim) Spider-Man teams up with Darkhawk, Speedball and Nova to battle a new team called The Metahumes. $1.75
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Uncanny X-Men 321 (Lobdell & ?) The X-Men are helpless as Legion begins to alter the past. Lilandra arrives with news that could threaten the Universe. $1.50/$1.95
Web of Spider-Man 121 (Kavanagh & Butler + Emberlin) Spider-Man's clone begins to discover information about his past that Peter Parker will not want to know about. $2.25

SHIPPING DECEMBER 13TH

Amazing Spider-Man 398 (DeMatteis & Bagley + Mahlstedt) Spider-Man is helpless against the poison injected into him during his battle with the Vulture and, as he makes up with Mary Jane, Doctor Octopus is on his trail for a final encounter. $1.50
Blackwulf 9 (Herdling & Medina + Anderson) Tantalus's awesome ambitions are revealed as the series draws to a conclusion. $1.50
Barbie 50 (Trusiani & DeCesare) Anniversary special. $2.50
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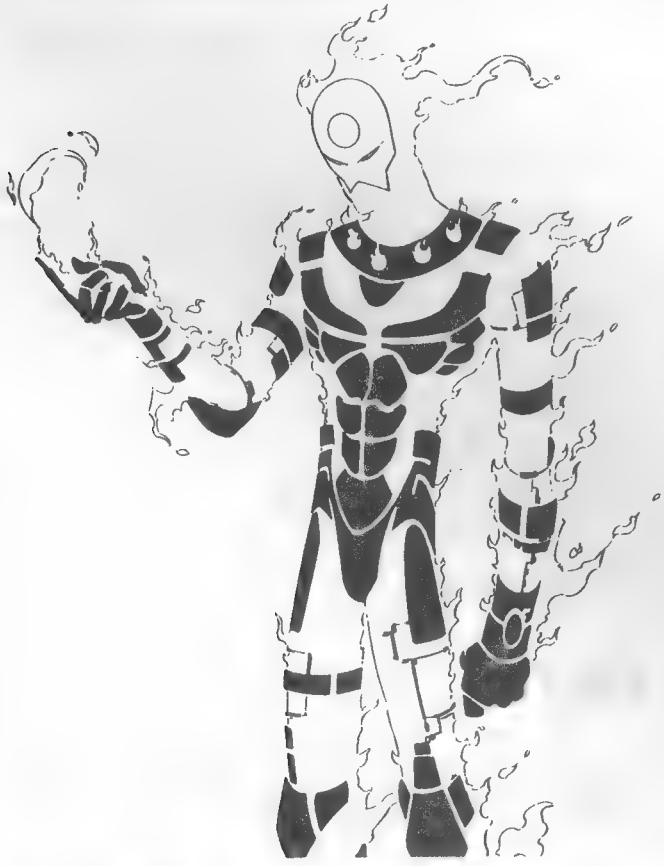

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STATESIDE'S MONTHLY GUIDE TO NEW COMICS

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imp	= air imported new issues
back	= back issues stocked
s-p	= small press & fanzines
merch	= videos, trading cards, T-shirts, posters, models, etc
Ind	= US independent comics (non-newsstand & manga)
Brit	= British comics & albums
frgn	= foreign language comics
u/g	= underground comics
gn	= graphic novels & trade paperback editions
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■ **Avalon Comics**, 143 Lavender Hill, London SW11. Mon-Thur 10.00-5.45, Fri 10.00-6.30; Sat 9.30-6.00 (imp, back, ind, Brit, gn, STO) 071-924 3609

■ **Comic Showcase**, 76 Neal St, London WC2. Mon - Wed 10-6; Thurs - Sat 10-7; Sun 12-5 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, cartoon books, original art) 071-240 3664

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 71 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1DG. Mon - Wed + Sat 10-6; Thurs + Fri 10-7 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, film & tv) 071 836 4179

■ **Gosh!** 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (opposite British Museum) 10-6 7 days a week inc Bank Hols. Late Thur-Fri til 7 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, largest selection of newspaper strip compilations in UK) 071 636 1011

■ **Mega-City Comics**, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ. Mon-Sun 10-6; late Thurs + Fri to 7. (imp, back, merch, s-p, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film-tv fantasy, horror, body art, subculture, STO) 071 485 9320

■ **Music and Video Exchange Bookshop**, 56 Notting Hill Gate, London W11. Mon-Sun 10.00-8.00 (back, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, RPG. Buy & exchange all comics) 071 229 8420

■ **Platinum Age Comics/Bayswater Books**, 27 Craven Terrace, Lancaster Gate, London W2 3EL. Mon - Sat 11-7 (but sometimes till midnight!) (back, ind, u/g, general 2nd hand books, search service) 071 402 7398

OUTER LONDON

■ **Altered Images**, 6 The Arcade, High St, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1ET. Mon-Wed & Fri 10-5.30; Thurs 10 - 6.30; Sat 9 - 6 (imp, back, ind merch, Brit, gn, STO) 081 770 3815

■ **Andy's Comic Cavern**, Windsor Open Market (back of Woolworth's), Bachelors Acre, Windsor. Sats only 7.30-4.00 (imp, back, ind, gn, STO) Free delivery for Windsor & Slough area. 0753 853381

■ **Atomic Comics**, 1112 High Rd, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 4AH. Mon-Sat 10 -6 excl Fri 10-7 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, 2nd hand horror fantasy sf bks, original art) 081-597 8547

■ **Calamity Comics**, 160 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2HR. Mon-Wed 10-6, Thurs & Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, fantasy tv &-film bks & merch, Sega & Nintendo game cartridges, videos) 081-427 3831

■ **Calamity Comics 2**, 90 Queens Road, The Broadway, Watford, Herts WD1 2LA. Mon-Tues 10-5.30; closed Wed; Thurs & Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, fantasy tv & film bks & merch, videos) 0923 249293

■ **Comic Shack**, 720 High Rd, Leytonstone, London E11 3NN. Mon-Thurs 9.30- 5.30; Fri & Sat 9.30-6.30; Sun 11-5. Also by appointment (imp, back, s-p, merch, u/g, gn, hbks) 081-539 7260/081-555 9303 (eve)

■ **Dynamic Comics**, Units 43-47 In Shops, 68 Church St, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RB. Mon - Sat 9 - 5.30 (imp, back, ind, s-p, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, merch) phone & fax 081-681 2597

■ **Edge of Forever, The**, 82 b Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7LW. Mon-Fri 9.30-6.00; Sat 9-6 (imp, back, s-p merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO) 081-298 1363

■ **Gary's Book & Comic Stall**, Site A65, The High Street, Walthamstow, London E17. Thur + Fri 10-5; Sat 8-5.30. Tube: Walthamstow Central (imp, back, s-p, ind, gn, STO, annuals, children's books)

■ **Heroes Akimbo Comics**, 674 High Rd, Leyton, London E10 6JP. (Tubes: Leyton, Leytonstone, Walthamstow Central) Mon-Sat 9-6; Sun 10-5 (imp, back, merch, STO, Brit) 081 558 8313

■ **Krypton Komics**, 252 High Road, Tottenham, London N15 4AJ (next to Tesco) Mon-Wed 10-6; Thur-Fri 9.30-7; Sat 9-6. Tube: Seven Sisters Road. (imp, back, s-p, ind, gn, STO) 081-801 5378

■ **Readers Dream**, 100A Harlington Road West, Feltham (near Heathrow airport) Middx TW14 0JJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-6.00 excl Wed - closed (imp, back, gn, STO) 081-844 0780

■ **Skinny Melink's**, 66 Loampit Vale, Lewisham, London SE13. Mon-Thur 11- 6.30; Fri 11-7; Sat 10-6.30; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, ind s-p, u/g, gn, STO) 081-318 0499

■ **South London Book Centre**, 18-19 Stockwell St, Greenwich, London SE10 9JN. Mon-Fri 10-6; Sat & Sun 9am-5.30pm (imp, back, ind, gn, u/g, 2nd hand & new SF-horror-fantasy novels, art bks, bargain bks, remainders) 081 659 9714 or 081 853 2151

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Road, Barnet, Herts EN4 8RF. Mon-Wed 10-7; Thur-Fri 10-8; Sat 9-6; Sun 10-3, later by appointment. (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, Brit, tv-film & fantasy, gn, STO) 081-449 5535

■ **They Walk Among Us**, 32 Union Court, Sheen Rd, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1AA. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 excl Fri 9.30-6 (imp, merch, back, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, fantasy/s-f/horror bks, STO, sub-culture) Phone/fax 081 948 8476

■ **30th Century Comics**, Unit 12, Putney Market (1st Floor), Putney Exchange Shopping Centre, Putney High St., London SW15 1TW. Mon-Wed, Fri & Sat 9.00-6.00; Thu 9.00-7.00 (imp, back, ind, gn STO) 081 778 8094

■ **Time Trek**, 46 High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1TR. Mon - Sat 9 - 5.30 (late Thurs to 8) (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, sf TV & film related merch, STO) 081 313 0677

■ **Westside Comics**, 392 Uxbridge Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB4 0EL. Mon-Sat 10-6, late Thurs-Fri to 6.30. (imp, back, ind, Brit, gn, STO). 081-813 5019

SOUTH EAST

■ **ACE Comics**, 1 Headgate Buildings, St John's St, Colchester, Essex C02 7AD. Mon -Sat 10-5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts) 0206 561912

■ **The American Comic Shop**, 1 Church Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4BS (just off High Street). Mon-Sat 9-5.30 ex Fri 9.30-6.00. (imp, back, gn, STO, merch, Trek & Star Wars merch, videos) 0634 817410

■ **Cartoon Shop**, Upper Galleries, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Basildon, Essex. Mon - Wed & Sat 10-6, Thurs & Fri 10-8 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, RPG) 0268 534194

■ **Cartoon Shop**, 368 Chartwell West, Top Floor, Victoria Circus Shopping Centre, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, RPG) 0702 613021

■ **The Comic Rocket**, 33 Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Mon-Wed 10-4.30; Thur-Fri 10-7.30; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, ind, s-p, merch, gn, u/g, STO) 0892 518771

■ **Comic Showcase**, 19-20 St Clements St, Oxford. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, gn, STO) 0865-723680

■ **Comics and Cards**, 84 St Mary Street, Southampton SO1 1NZ. Mon-Sat 8.00-7.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO) phone/fax: 0703 235324

■ **David's Comics**, 3 Sydney Street, Brighton, Sussex BN1 4EN. Mon-Fri 9.30-6; Sat 9-6. (imp, back, ind, u/g, Brit, STO, gn, exchange, club discount) 0273 690223

■ **Fantastic Store Ink**, 14 Gardner Street, Brighton BN1 1UP. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-6. (imp, back, ind, s-p, merch, Brit, u/g, STO, original art) 0273 670012

■ **Incognito Comic Shop**, 1-2 The Friars, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2AS. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, Brit, STO, film/tv merch) phone/fax: 0227-785898

■ **Incognito Comic Shop**, 14 Starnes Court, Union St, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EB. Mon-Fri 10.00 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, Brit, STO, film/tv related merch) phone/fax: 0622-683642

■ **Renegade Comics**, Unit 11, Elmes Arcade, High Street, Stevenage Old Town, Herts SG1 3EF. Mon -Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, v/g, gn, STO, RPG) 0438 747468

■ **Siegi's Comics & Bags**, Unit 3, 6 Orange St, Canterbury, Kent. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, Brit, gn, STO, tv SF, gum cards, sf memorabilia) 0227 470840

■ **Slough Computers**, 245 High Street, Slough, Berks SL1 1BN. Mon-Sat 9.00-5.30. (imp, ind, gn, STO, Sega & Nintendo game carts) 0753 521594

■ **Universal Comics**, 196c High St, Slough SO1 1RT (above Curries). Mon-Sat 9.30 - 6.30 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO) 0753 571799

■ **Universal Comics**, 16 London Road, Staines. Mon - Fri 10.30 - 6.30, Sat 10 - 6.30. (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, STO) 0784 460300

■ **Whatever Comics**, 2 Burgate Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2HH. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, model kits) 0227 453226

■ **Wokingham Comics & Trading Cards**, Wokingham Indoor Market, Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire. Sats only (imp, back, ind, merch, gn, STO) 0734 790441

■ **Wonderworld**, 125 Albert Road, Southsea, Portsmouth PO5 3SQ. Tues-Sat 10-2, 3-6. (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, gn, STO, FRPG & miniatures) 0705 833 272

■ **Wonderworld**, 133 St Mary Street, Southampton S01 1NX. Tues-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, FRPG & miniatures) 0703 634658

NEW **Words End Books & Comics**, 10 The Boulevard, Crawley, West Sussex. Mon-Fri 9-5.30; Sat 9-6 (imp, back, ind, gn, STO, Star Wars toys etc, general 2nd hand bks, search service) 0293 547937

MIDLANDS

■ **Another World**, 23 Silver Street, Leicester LE1 5EU. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0533 515266

■ **Another World**, 11 Market Street, Nottingham. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0602 484122

■ **Arrival Comics & Books**, 2 Broad Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30. (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit) 0902-313 660

■ **Bookworm**, Unit 3, 33-39 Tower St, King's Lynn, Norfolk. Mon-Sat 11-4 (back, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, fantasy & sf, early Penguins, general fic & non-fic, records) 0553 760904/771880

■ **Central City Comics**, 4 Eagle Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JB. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, gn, STO) 0473 233017

■ **Comics Unlimited**, 4 Clair Court, Lime Street, Bedford MK40 1NH. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, Brit, u/g, STO, RPG) 0234 218984

■ **Comics Unlimited**, Unit 11, The Arcade, Letchworth, Hertfordshire. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, Brit, u/g, STO, RPG) 0462 480018

■ **Demon Comics**, 102 Eastgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1QT. Mon - Sat 10-6. (imp, back, merch, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, t-shirts, sci-fi models) 0452 330370

■ **Fantasy World**, 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1NU. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0782 279294/fax 0782 202381

■ **The Final Frontier**, 29 St Nicholas Place, Leicester LE1 4LD. Mon - Fri 9.30 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.00. (imp, back, ind, Brit, gn, STO) Established 1984 0533 514347

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 31 Cross Cheaping, Coventry CV1 1HF (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, film/ tv material, sf/horror bks) ph/fax 0203 229672

■ **Ground Zero**, 11 Handley Arcade, Mansfield, Notts NG18 1NQ. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, STO, accessories) 0623 22017

■ **Mephisto Comics**, 81 Ber Street, Norwich, NR1 3RD. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, merch, gn, ind, s-p, u/g, Brit, STO) 0603 762762

■ **New Worlds**, 22 West Parade, Lincoln LN1 1JT. Mon-Sat 9.30-4.30 excl Wed - closed. (comics, bks, mags, sf & fantasy specialists) 0522 530069

■ **Nowhere Comics**, 3 Kings Court, Bridge Street, (next to Bridge St Records) Walsall. Mon-Sat 9.00-5.30, (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, videos) 0922 643352

■ **Nostalgia & Comics**, 14-16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham. Mon - Thurs 9.15 - 5.45, Fri + Sat 9.15 - 6.00 (imp, back, merch, gn, ind, s-p, u/g, Brit, STO) 021 643 0143

■ **Page 45**, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY. Mon-Sat 9-6. (imp, back, s-p, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn, STO, indie comix & indie merch specialists, manga) 0115 9508045

■ **Planet X**, 5 London Rd, Worcester. Now open all week 10.00-5.30, Thurs til 8.00pm. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, STO-monthly) Phone/fax: 0905 355055

■ **Time Zone**, 12 Fish Street (off Butcher Row), Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 1UR. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG) 0743 365192

■ **Zoom Comics!!**, Unit 3 Inshops Centre, 65 South Parade, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham B72 1QX Mon-Sat 9.00-5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO) 021 354 7500

NORTH WEST

■ **Arcadia Comics**, 12 Clarence Arcade, Stamford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 7PT. (next to Comet) Mon-Sat 10-5.00 (closed Tues) (imp, back, ind, horror-sf mags/bks, Who, Trek, ltd merch & gn, STO, ltd toys & figures) 061 339 1816

■ **Arcadia Comics**, 75 Oldham Road, Rochdale, Lancs OL16 5QR Mon-Sat 10-5.00 (closed Tues) (imp, back, ind, horror-sf mags/bks, Who, Trek, ltd merch, gn, Brit, STO, ltd toys/figures) 0706 713770

■ **Equinox Books**, 50 Bridge Street, Bolton, Lancs BL1 2EG. Mon-Sat 10-5.30, Sun 10-4 (imp, back, merch, videos, film stills, soundtracks)

NEW **Forbidden Planet Ltd**, 92 Bold St, Liverpool L1 4HR. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, STO, film/tv material, sf & horror bks) phone/fax: 051 707 1491

■ **Imagination Station**, Unit 28, Portland Shopping Centre, Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1NT. Mon - Sat 9 - 5.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO)

■ **Odyssey 7**, 21 Hanging Ditch, Corn Exchange Buildings, Manchester M4 3ES. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5.30pm. (imp, back, sf-fantasy-horror books, postcards, videos, badges, soundtracks, stills, LF filmbooks, Star Trek, Doctor Who) 061 832 7044

■ **Odyssey 7**, Precinct Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RN. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5.30pm (imp, back, sf-fantasy-horror novels, postcards, posters, badges, stills, LF film books, Trek, Dr Who, etc) 061 273 6666

■ **Sartori Comics**, The Assembly Rooms, King Street, Lancaster. Thurs-Sat 10.00 - 4.30pm (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO) 0524 733943 (after 6pm)

■ **Thunderbooks**, 332 Lytham Rd, Blackpool. 10-5.30 Tues, Thurs-Sat all year; Mon-Sun in season (closed Wed). Out of season open Wed, closed Sun-Mon. (imp, s-p, back, merch, ind, limited u/g, Brit, frgn, kits, gn, t-shirts, media collectors' items) 0253-48321

■ **Thunderbooks II**, 116 Friargate, Preston, Lancs. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, limited u/g, Brit, frgn, gn, kits, t-shirts, media collectors' items) 0772-204287

■ **The Time Tunnel**, 66 Edleston Road, Crewe, Cheshire CW2 7HD. Mon - Sat 10.00am - 5.30pm excl Weds. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, model kits, toys, action figures, Doctor Who, Star Trek)

■ **Time Zone**, 3 Academy Place, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 2NR. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, RPG) 0925 651185

■ **Worlds Apart** *now at* 58-60 Lime St (city centre), Liverpool. Mon - Sat 10-6 excl Fri 10-7 (imp, back, ind, merch, s-p, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, fantasy film mags) 051 707 0839

NORTH EAST

■ **Armadillo**, 16-22 Anlaby Road, Hull, North Humberside HU1 2PA. Mon-Sat 10-6; late Thur-Fri to 8 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, u/g, STO, videos, ppbks) 0482 29787

■ **Books N' Comics**, Unit 15, Forbes Building, Linthorpe Road, Middlesborough, Cleveland TS1 4AW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO, fantasy gn, film mags, Dr Who, Trek) 0642 249143

■ **Comicville**, Ground Floor, 54 The Arcade, The Piece Hall, Halifax HX1 1RE, Yorkshire. Tures-Fri 9.30-5; Sat 10-5 Sun 11-5 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, model kits, toys, Who, Trek, videos) 0374 482186

■ **Dells Comic Shop**, 5 Duke St, Bradford 1, Yorks. Mon-Sat 9-5 excl Wed 9-3 (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, horror masks, tv fantasy mags) 0274 390 541

■ **Fantasique**, 115 High St West, Sunderland (near Joplins). Mon-Sat 9.30-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, STO, fantasy bks, manga) Discount cards available. 091 565 4485

■ **Hysteria Comics**, Unit 2, The Arches, Park Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS24 7PH. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, gn, STO, film mags) 0429 236952

■ **Nu Earth Comics**, 4 Davygate Centre, York YO1 2SU. Mon - Fri 10 - 5.30; Sat 9 - 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, art bks) 0904 611 461

■ **Nostalgia & Comics**, 12 Matilda, off the Moor, Sheffield, Yorks. Mon-Fri 10-6; Sat 9.15-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, original art, model kits, sf & fantasy gns, horror mags, newspaper strip bks) 0742 769475

■ **Odyssey 7**, 6 Harrison Street, off Vicar Lane, Leeds LS1 6PA. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, sf - fantasy - horror bks, posters, postcards, badges, stills, Star Trek, Doctor Who, etc) 0532 426 325

■ **Odyssey 7**, 30 Eastgate, Leeds LS2 7JL. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, sf - fantasy - horror bks, posters, postcards, badges, stills, Star Trek, Doctor Who, etc) 0532 426 325

■ **Sheffield Space Centre**, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield, Yorks. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00 excl Wed. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, gn, STO, Star Trek items) 0742 758905

■ **Skyrack Book Service**, 51 The Superstore, Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8LY. Yorkshire. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5pm; excl Weds: 9.30am - 1pm. (imp, back, ind, Brit, STO, SF hbk gn & magazines - many pulps) Establ 1965.

■ **The Last Picture Show**, 40 The Lanes, The Oasis, Meadowhall Centre, Sheffield S9 1EP. Mon-Thur 10-8, Fri 10-9, Sat 9-7, Sun 12-5. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, film-rock memorabilia) 0742 569604

WEST COUNTRY

■ **Floppy Tongue Comics**, 96 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7QY. Mon-Fri 11.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO) 0722 331107

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 30 Penn St., Bristol BS1 3AS. Mon-Fri 10.00-5.30, Sat 10.00-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film & tv, videos, STO) 0272 298692

■ **Forever People**, 35 Park Street, Bristol BS1 5NH. Mon-Sat 10.00-6.00 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, STO, sf/fantasy new & 2nd hand bks, RPG, videos, tv sf memorabilia, sub-culture, body art) 0272 265454

■ **The Hobbit Hole**, 9 Commercial Road, Gloucester. Mon 12-5.30; Tues-Sat 10-5.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, gn, STO, T-shirts, film-tv mags + merch) 0452 309 533

■ **Joy's Comics**, 25 High East Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1EZ. Mon - Sun 7.30 - 6. (imp back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, gn) 0305 269737 (after 6pm 833304)

■ **Kathies Comics**, 20 Market Avenue, Plymouth, PL1 1PH. Mon - Fri 9.30 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO) 0752 257800

■ **Maelstrom Comics**, St Nicholas Market, Corn Street, Bristol. Mon-Sat 10-5. (imp, back, s-p, small merch, ind, u/g, gn, STO)

■ **Purple Haze**, 58 Eastlake Walk, Drake Circus, Plymouth, PL1 1BX (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, gn, STO) 0752 254136

■ **Wonderworld**, 803 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6AP. Tues-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, FRPG & miniatures, Games Workshop specialist stockist) 0202 422964

■ **Wonderworld**, 143 Gloucester Rd, Bristol. Mon-Sat 9-7 (imp, back, ind, gn, merch, STO, RPG, u/g, Brit, original art) 0272 244655

ISLE OF WIGHT

■ **Astounding Comics**, 61 Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1UL. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, gn, STO, RPG, videos) 0983 525320

WALES

NEW **Anime Projects Shop**, 19 High St, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 1NP. Mon-Sat 9-5 excl Wed 9-12 (anime, manga, merch, gn, STO, CoBRA) 0248 370044

■ **Cardiff Fantasy Centre**, 1st Floor, Jacobs Market, West Canal Wharf, Cardiff. Sats only 9.30-5 (imp, back s-p, merch, ind, gn, STO, videos; establ 12 yrs) 0222 563005

■ **Comics & Collectibles**, Stall 69, Pontypridd Indoor Market, Mid-Glamorgan, South Wales. Wed, Fri, Sat 9.30- 4.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, gn, STO, model kits, tradsing card specialists)

■ **Comix Shoppe**, 13 Shoppers Walk, Swansea SA1 3AY. Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-5.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, gn, film/tv mags, RPG, Games Workshop stockists) 0792 642097

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 5 Duke Street, Cardiff. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 excl Thurs 10-6.30 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, gn, STO) 0222 228885

■ **Journey Into Mystery**, The Emporium, 34 Castle Arcade, Cardiff. Tues - Fri 11.00 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, gn, STO, indie records & CDs)

■ **Negative Zone**, Provision Market Gallery, High Street, Newport, Gwent NP9 1DD. Mon - Sat 9.00am - 5.00pm. (imp, back, s-p, ind, gn, Brit, STO) 0633 222159

SCOTLAND

■ **The Adventure Zone**, 280 High St, Glasgow G4 0QR. Mon-Sat 9.30-6, Sun 10-5 (imp, back, Brit, u/g, STO, merch, s-f bks, tv-related supplies, videos, models, Trek, Dell-Gold Key specialists, mags) 041-552 3323

■ **AKA Books & Comics**, 25 Parnie Street, Glasgow G1 5RJ. Mon-Sat 10-5; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, gn) 041 552 6692

■ **City Centre Comics**, 31-35 Parnie St, Glasgow G1. Mon-Sat 10.00-5.30, Sun 12-5. (back issues only) 041 552 6692 or 041-632 2786 after 6pm

■ **Earth 2 Comics**, Argyle Shopping Centre, 28 Argyle St, Glasgow G2 8AD. Mon-Fri 10.00-5.00; Sat 10-5.30. (back, gn, ind, merch) 041-647 6810 (after 6pm)

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 2 - 3 Teviot Place, Edinburgh, EH1 2QZ. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30, excl Thurs till 6.30. (imp, s-p, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, gn, STO) 031-225 8613

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 168 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2LW. Mon - Wed 10 - 5.30; Thurs + Fri 10 - 6; Sat 10 - 5.30. (imp, back, s-p, ind, merch, u/g, Brit, gn, STO) 041 331 1215

■ **Future Shock**, 89 Byres Road, Partick, Glasgow G11. Mon-Sat 10-6; Sun 1-5 (imp, back, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, gn, STO, SF & horror gn & hbk, film bks & mags, artwork, jewellery) 041 339 8184

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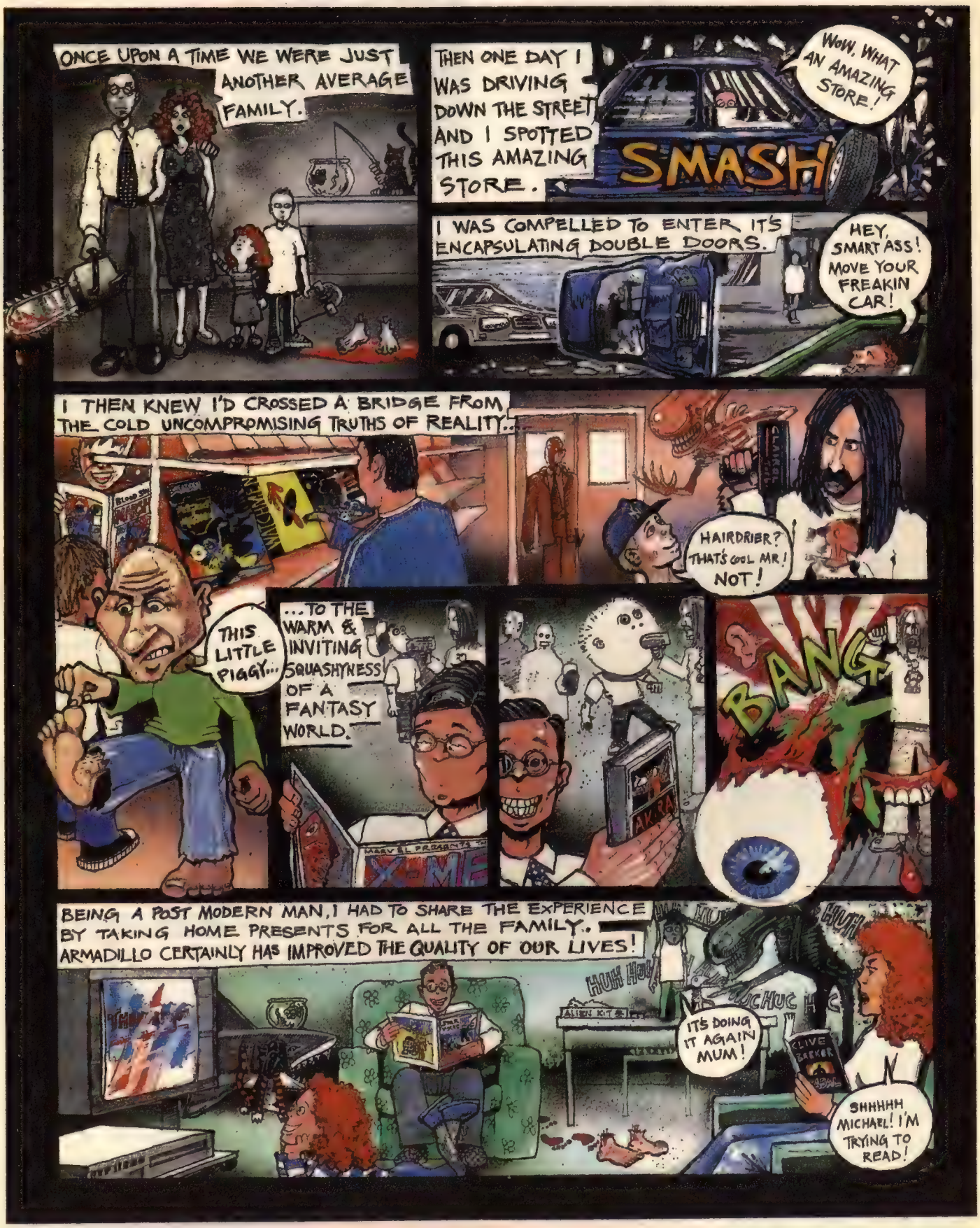
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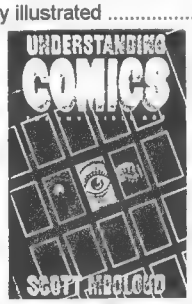

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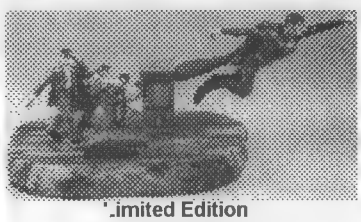

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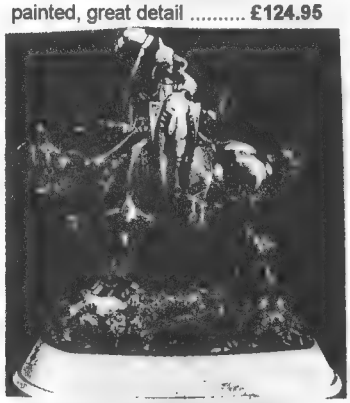

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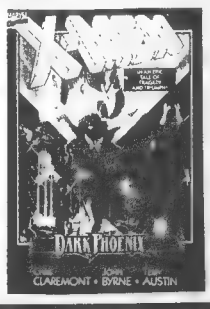

GUIDE TO ABBREVIATIONS

gn	Graphic Novel
tpb	Trade Paperback
h/c	Hardcover
Ltd	Limited Edition
s/c	Softcover
p/f	Prestige Format
s/n	Signed & Numbered

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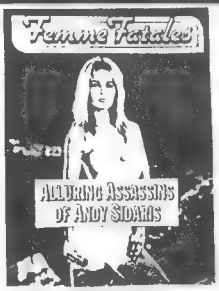

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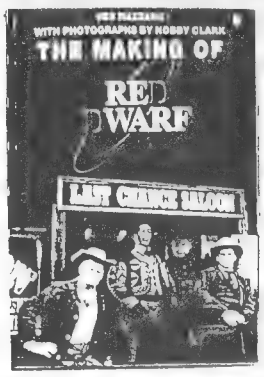

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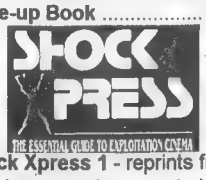

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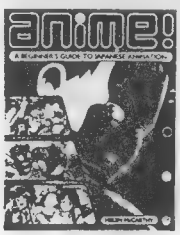

Anime! A Beginners Guide To Japanese Animation **£12.99**
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Stocks are very limited so please call first to check availablility.

Note: You need a VCR capable of playing the NTSC video format for all of the following title.:

KEY: (D) = English dubbed
(S) = Subtitles

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Blue Skies Of Betrayal **£28.00**
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Castle Of Cagliostro **£28.00**
Crash Corrigan:
One More Chance **£25.00**
Crystal Triangle (S) **£24.00**
Genesis Surviver Gaiarth:
Stage 1 (S) **£30.00**
Gall Force (S) **£25.00**
Giant Robo: Night The Earth Stood Still (D) **£22.00**
The Guyver:
Episodes 1 & 2 (D) **£20.00**
Episodes 3 & 4 (D) **£20.00**
Episodes 5 & 6 (D) **£20.00**
Harmageddon (S) **£34.00**
The Humanoid (S) **£26.00**
Dominion Tank Police:
Act I (S) **£15.00**
Act II (S) **£15.00**
Act III (S) **£15.00**
Act IV (S) **£15.00**
Zillion:
Parts 1 - 5 (D) each **£12.00**
Rumic World:
Fire Tripper (S) **£18.00**
Mermaid Forest (S) **£18.00**
The Supergal (S) **£18.00**
The Laughing Target (S) **£18.00**
Vengeance Of The
Space Pirate (D) **£25.00**
They Were 11 (S) **£28.00**
Nadia:
2: Little Fugitives (D) **£11.00**
3: Mysterious Sea
Monsters (D) **£11.00**
4: Nautilus To
The Rescue (D) **£11.00**
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1:Only You (S) **£25.00**
2: Beautiful Dreamer (S) **£25.00**
4: Remember My Love (S) **£25.00**
Project A-KO (S) **£25.00**
3 x 3 Eyes Pt.1 (D) **£12.00**
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MORE TITLES AVAILABLE. PLEASE WRITE OR CALL FOR EXTENDED & UPDATED VIDEO LIST.

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The following page represents a selection from our trading card stock. There are many other card titles available. Please write or call if you do not see what you want.

We also have a good range of Chase cards available for all the popular card titles. Stocks change frequently so please call for latest lists & prices.

Cards are available in boxes (usually 36 packs) or in single packs.
Minimum card order is 5 packs.

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Box only **£18.00**
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Box / Pack ..... **£69.95 / £1.95**
Sam Keith's The Maxx
Box / Pack ..... **£36.95 / £1.25**
Evil Ernie
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Batman Animated II
Box / Pack ..... **£32.95 / £0.95**
Batman:
Saga Of The Dark Knight
Box / Pack **£54.95/ £1.75**
Return Of Superman
Set **£19.95**
Return Of superman
Box only **£59.99**
Factory Set + album. Includes exclusive silver foil card **£69.95**
Superman: Man of Steel
Pack **£1.50**
Deathmate
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COMICS

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Marvel Universe series 3
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Tin Set **£36.95**

FILM & TV

Dr. Who
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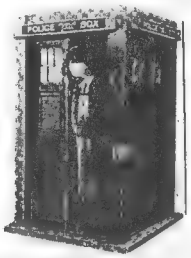

Dr. Who Series 2
Box/Pack ..... **£34.95/£1.00**
Dr. Who Victoria Gallery Set
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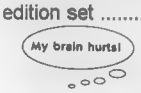

Monty Python's Flying Circus:
Act 1 - Photos, video capture & original artwork combine to make this one of the finest examples of modern Swedish architecture yet seen ..... **£35.00/£1.25**
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ADULT

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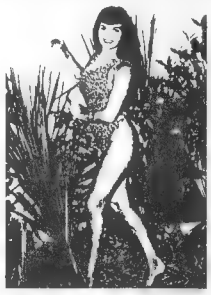

Bunny Yeager's Betty Page
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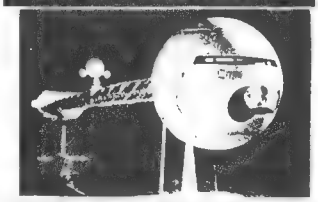
The world of model kits and kit building has seen major changes in recent years. Materials such as Vinyl, resin and cold cast porcelain have enabled sculptors and kit designers to add amazing levels of detail to their creations.
A good level of model building experience is required to get the very best out of these superb kits.

Prices shown are for models in kit form. If you would prefer to have your kit built and painted please call for a quote.

FILM & TELEVISION



2001:Discovery Resin Model Kit This 30" long kit of the spaceship from 2001:A Space Odyssey is simply spectacular **£89.95**
2001:Pod Resin kit Splendid detail on this 2001:A Space Odyssey kit. Nice companion to Discovery **£34.95**
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Creature From The Black Lagoon Cold-Cast kit - Chris Walas sculpted this stunning 10" kit **£99.95**
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Alien - excellent vinyl kit of the original Giger Alien **£44.99**
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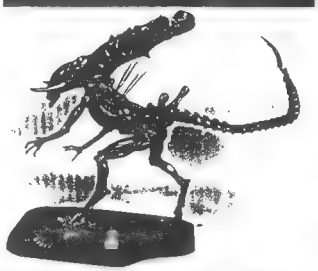
ALIEN



NEW! King Alien Resin Original Sculpture - To see the amazing detail on this 4 ft model send for colour photo ..... **£ please ask**

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COMICS

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Thunderbirds:Rescue Panorama set **£23.99**
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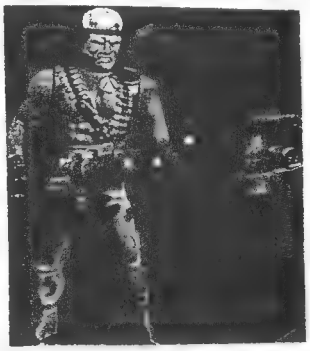
Lt. Ripley **£8.95**
Corp. Hicks **£8.95**



Drake **£8.95**
Sgt. Apone **£8.95**
Bishop **£8.95**
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Power Loader **£7.95**

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These new figures have built in projectors that display images onto any surface. 5 figures in the set.

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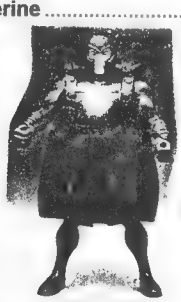

Magneto **£14.95**

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Balance of Power **£4.50**

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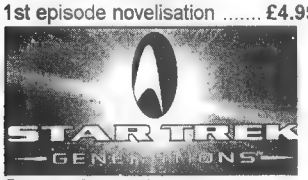

Generations -this hardccover edition of the Next Generation movie novelisation features behind the scenes info and 8 pages of colour photographs **£12.99**

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#27 ..... **£3.95**
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#29 ..... **£3.95**

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#6 ..... **£3.95**
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Next Gen: Official Fan Club Magazine #100 - Landmark issue for this excellent magazine ... **£3.00**

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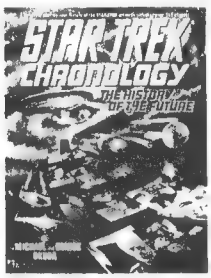
Next Generation Tribute Book
Behind the scenes look at the people & ideas that create the Next Generation universe **£12.95**

Next Generation Crew Book
Detailed profilesof each crew member plus a special section on the new Enterprise **£12.95**



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Complete year by year history of the Star Trek universe **£11.95**

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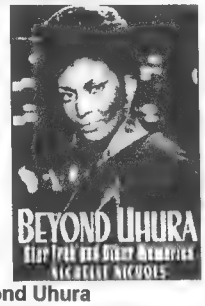

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Nichelle Nichols autobiography reveals much about herself and her times working on Star Trek from TV series to movies **£16.99**

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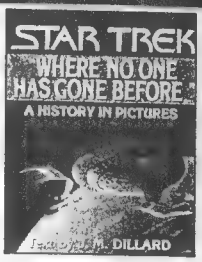
BOOKS



Star Trek: Where No One Has Gone Before - A wonderful celebration of Star Trek. Featuring hundreds of colour photographs (many published for the first time), covering all of Star Trek's history including **Voyager**. Supplied with collectible bookmark **£41.99**

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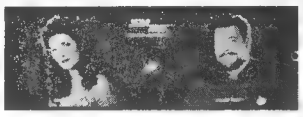

Troi & Riker **£11.95**
Worf & Data **£11.95**
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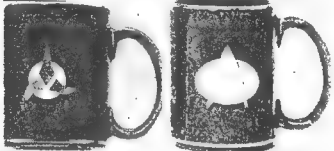
Enterprise Schematic **£8.95**
Troi Holodeck Mug **£9.95**
Data Holodeck Mug **£9.95**
Trek Ships Tall Mug **£12.99**
Black Mug with Gold Ships/Logos **£11.99**
DS9: Quarks Bar Large Mug **£9.99**
U.F.P. Logo Cocktail Glass ... **£9.99**
Generations:
Movie Logo Mug **£10.99**

Generations Figural Mugs:
Worf **£14.95**
Troi **£14.95**
Geordi **£14.95**

Metal Insignia Mugs

New range from Rawcliffe featuring metal Star Trek icons.

Enterprise NCC 1701 ..... **£10.99**
Enterprise NCC 1701-D **£10.99**



Klingon Logo **£10.99**
NG: Delta Shield **£10.99**

STAR TREK . NEXT GENERATION . MUGS . T-SHIRTS . UNIFORMS . PINS

METAL INSIGNIA MUGS

Ferengi Logo **£10.99**
Romulan Logo **£10.99**

Borg Logo **£10.99**
Sciences Insignia **£10.99**
Command Insignia **£10.99**
Engineering Insignia **£10.99**
U.F.P Symbol **£10.99**
Starfleet Academy **£10.99**

PLATES

Next Gen:5th Anniversary Plates
Riker **£29.95**

Next Generation Crew **£29.99**

Best of Both Worlds **£29.99**
Encounter At Farpoint **£29.99**
DS9: Captain Sisko **£29.95**
DS9: Station **£29.95**

PEWTER MINIATURES

Highly detailed miniatures of ships & crew members from classic Trek, Next Generation & Deep Space Nine.

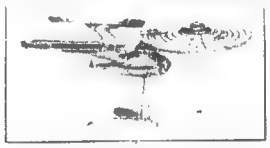
Crew:
Data **£12.95**
Worf **£12.95**
Picard **£12.95**
Riker **£12.95**
Geordi **£12.95**
Crusher **£12.95**
Kirk **£12.95**
Spock **£12.95**
Scotty **£12.95**
Uhuru **£12.95**
Picard 90mm) **£23.95**
Kirk (90mm) **£23.95**
Sisko (90mm) **£23.95**

PEWTER MINIATURES

Spock (90mm) **£23.95**

Klingon Warrior **£12.95**
Guinan **£12.95**
DS9 Odo (90mm) **£23.95**
Ships:

Ferengi Marauder **£24.99**
Enterprise 1701-A **£29.99**



Movie Enterprise **£43.95**
DS9 Runabout **£23.99**
Regula I Station **£19.99**

A very special limited edition pewter sculpture of the Enterprise 1701-D **£94.95**

SOUNDTRACKS

DS9: Original TV Soundtrack **£13.99**
Classic Trek TV Music 3 CD Box Set **£34.95**

AUDIO NOVELS

Sarek
read by Mark Leonard **£16.95**
Reunion
read by Gates Mcfadden ... **£10.99**

All Good Things **£14.95**
Windows On A Lost World
read byWalter Koenig **£12.95**
Star Trek: The Lost Years
read by James Doohan & Leonard Nimoy **£10.99**

AUDIO NOVELS

Emissary read by
Nana Visitor **£10.99**
Conversational Klingon
read by Michael Dorn **£9.99**

T - SHIRTS

(Available in Large or Extra Large Sizes)

3 Doctors (Mcoy, Crusher, Bashir) **£13.99**

Generations Logo T-Shirt ... **£14.99**
Odo & Quark **£14.99**
DS9 Excuses **£12.99**
'To Boldly Go...' Logo **£13.99**

DS9 Schematic T-Shirt **£10.99**
Quarks Bar **£10.99**
DS9 Crew Shirt **£14.99**

DS9 Station Mega Print **£16.99**
Character History T-Shirt ... **£12.99**

Other Apparel

'To Boldly Go...'
Logo Cap **£12.99**
'To Boldly Go...'
Logo Sweatshirt **£18.99**
DS9:Hand Towel Set **£39.95**

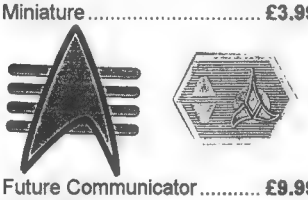
DS9 Gold Logo Cap **£11.99**
DS9 Gold Embroidered logo Sweatshirt **£39.95**
DS9 Polo Shirt **£19.95**

UNIFORMS

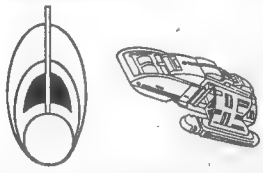
Next Gen:Red Crew Shirt ... **£39.99**
Next Gen:Gold Crew Shirt .. **£39.99**
Next Gen: Blue Crew Shirt . **£39.99**

PINS & ACCESSORIES

NG: Communicator Pins
Full Size **£9.99**
Half Size **£5.99**
Miniature **£3.99**

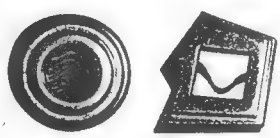


Future Communicator **£9.99**
NG: Klingon Communicator Pin **£7.99**
NG: Federation Communicator Pin with Sound FX (full size) **£10.99**
Generations Communicator Pin **£9.99**



Bajoran Communicator Pin .. **£9.99**
DS9 Runabout Pin **£8.99**

Bajoran Rank Major Pin **£4.99**
Bajoran Rank Captain **£4.99**
Bajoran Rank Lieutenant **£4.99**
DS9 Pin Set 1 - Contains one of each of 5 insignia pins **£16.95**
Next Gen:Klingon Symbol **£6.99**
Classic Episode Pin #55: Assignment Earth **£6.99**
Classic Episode Pin #57: Elaan Of Troyius **£6.99**

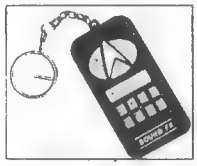


Silver Medallion Pin - Worf's sash features this pin. Complete with moving LCD display. This pin also doubles as the 'eye' on a Borg faceplate **£17.99**
Silver Wings Brooch - Also featured on Worf's sash and found on Borg costumes. Complete with moving LCD display **£17.99**

STAR TREK . DEEP SPACE NINE . MEMORABILIA . POSTERS . POSTCARDS

NOVELTIES

Classic Star Trek Sound FX Keychain **£10.49**



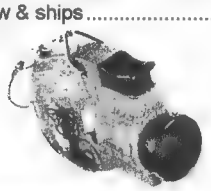
Next Generation: Sound FX Keychain £10.49
Classic Communicator Replica Keychain £10.49

N.G.:Phaser Replica Keychain £10.49

Star Trek: Next Generation Office Supplies

Post-It Notepad Holder **£12.99**

Business Card Holder **£8.99**
Letter Holder **£12.99**
Pencil Cup **£8.99**
Digital Desk Clock **£14.99**
Geordi Space Visor **£2.50**
Movie Keychain Viewer Features 24 pictures from the Star Trek movies (all 6) **£5.99**
Next Generation Keychain Viewer - features 24 images of crew & ships **£5.99**



Next Generation Aliens Keychain Viewer - Features 24 pictures of NG aliens **£5.99**
Next Generation Music Box Sturdy wooden music box plays the Star Trek theme & features a crew photo on the lid £49.95
Ferengi, Borg, Klingon Hologram - 3 adversaries in one great hologram **£19.95**

TOYS

Star Trek Classic Phaser with sound FX **£14.99**
Classic Communicator **£14.99**

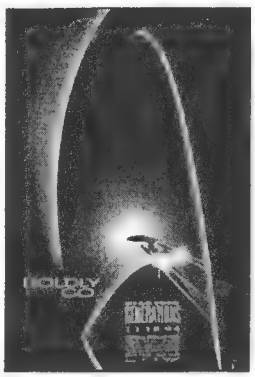
TOYS

Next Generation Phaser with lights & sound **£11.99**
Enterprise 1701-D with lights & sound **£39.95**
Transporter Playset **£39.95**

COINS

Set of 3 medallion collector coins feature Picard on one coin, Troi & Riker on another and Worf, Geordi & Data on the third. The back of erach coin features the Enterprise. Packaged in deluxe collectors case with full colour booklet for ecah coin. Limited edition **£99.95**

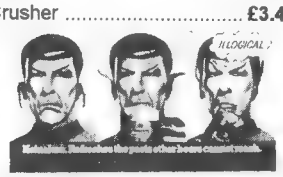
POSTERS & PRINTS



Generation Movie Poster Advance U.S. One Sheet ... **£12.99**
'Big As Life Posters':

Troi **£6.99**
Crusher **£6.99**
Worf **£6.99**
Picard **£6.99**
Riker **£6.99**
Geordi **£6.99**

Next Generation Hot Shot series. Posters measuring 12" x 36"
Picard **£3.49**
Worf **£3.49**
Riker **£3.49**
Data **£3.49**
LaForge **£3.49**
Troi **£3.49**
Crusher **£3.49**



Spock Heineken Poster **£12.99**

POSTERS & PRINTS

Star Trek: Motion Picture **£4.95**
Wrath Of Khan **£4.95**
Search For Spock **£4.95**
Voyage Home **£4.95**
Final Frontier **£4.95**
Enterprise 1701-D Cutaway Poster - featuring incredible attention to detail **£17.99**

Technical Enterprise **£4.49**

Next Generation 7th Anniversary Commemorative Deluxe Poster. Very high quality print **£18.99**
Next Generation: Space..The Final Frontier Deluxe Poster **£18.99**

Two superb examples of Star Trek art. Both featuring Klingon warships against a stunning backdrop. Printed on heavy stock paper. Superb print quality.

Bird of Prey: On Patrol **£21.99**
Home To Qo'nos **£21.99**

Hologram Postcards

DS9 Station **£2.99**
DS9 Crew **£2.99**
DS9 Cardassian Ship **£2.99**
DS9 Quark **£2.99**
DS9 Chromium Card **£2.99**

Large Postcards

DS9 Crew 1 ..... **£2.50**
DS9 Crew 2 ..... **£2.50**
DS9 Station **£2.50**
DS9 Sisko **£2.50**
DS9 Kira **£2.50**
DS9 Odo **£2.50**
DS9 Quark **£2.50**
DS9 Dax **£2.50**

AUTOGRAPHED PLAQUES

All the following plaques feature a high quality photograph (protected by a perspex cover) mounted on a polished wooden base with name plate & signature of the featured artist.

James doohan 'Scotty' **£94.99**
Next Generation Crew **£295.00**

Capt. Picard **£149.95**
Tasha Yar **£94.99**
Ensign Ro **£89.99**
DS9: Quark **£94.99**
DS9: Jake Sisco **£79.95**

DS9: Miles O'Brien **£94.99**
DS9 Crew (unsigned) **£84.99**
Kirk: Limited edition laser etched disc **£149.95**

TRADING CARDS

Official Trading Cards Series 1
Box only **£36.95**
Official Trading Cards Series 2
Pack only **£1.25**
Next Generation Episode Cards
Box / Pack ..... **£39.99 / £1.25**
Next Generation Inaugural Edition
Box/Pack ..... **£34.95 / £1.25**
Star Trek:Skybox Master series
Box / Pack ..... **£39.99 / £1.25**

Master Series 1994
Box/Pack ..... **£44.99/£1.50**
Deep Space Nine
Box / Pack ..... **£34.95 / £1.00**
DS9: Series Premiere
Set **£12.95**
Star Trek IV:Voyage Home
Set **£9.95**
Star Trek European issue Leaf Cards Set - 72 card b/w set made in 1967 for distribution in Europe. The U.S. equivalent series now sells for around $2,000! Very limited stocks **£89.95**

STAR TREK . VOYAGER . MODEL KITS. TRADING CARDS. GRAPHIC NOVELS

TRADING CARDS

The following collections of Star Trek cards were found following Gene Rodeberry's death. These 16 card sets were produced for promotion of the TV series & movies. Limited stocks available.

Wrath of Khan - 4 different sets available (each) **£7.95**
Search For Spock
3 different sets available (each) **£7.95**
Captain Kirk **£7.95**
Mr. Spock **£7.95**
Star Trek:Motion Picture
3 different sets available (each) **£7.95**
Costumes - 3 different sets available (each) **£7.95**
Star Trek:TV Series
3 different sets available (each) **£7.95**

MODEL KITS

Enterprise 1701-D **£14.99**
Enterprise 1701-A Special Edition with Lights & Sound **£29.95**

Enterprise 3 Ship Set
TV, Movie & Next Generation
£10.99
3 Piece Enterprise Set
Chrome Edition **£19.99**

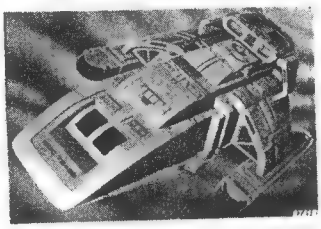
Adversary Set
Featuring Ferengi Marauder, Romulan Warbird and Klingon Bird of Prey **£12.99**

3 Ship Set - features Original versions of Enterprise, Romulan Warbird & Bird of Prey **£7.99**

MODEL KITS

Galileo Shuttle **£7.95**
Enterprise Command Bridge **£12.95**
U.S.S. Excelsior - great looking kit of this much requested super-starship **£19.99**

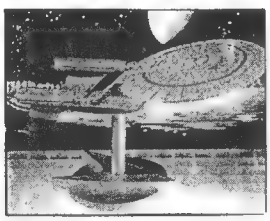
Deep Space Nine Station ... **£19.99**



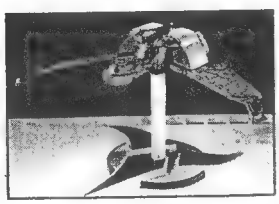
DS9 Runabout **£16.99**
Next Generation Klingon Cruiser **£12.95**
Next Generation Enterprise with fibre optic lighting **£49.95**
Picard Vinyl figure **£19.99**
Star Trek IV:
Klingon Cruiser **£8.99**
U.S.S. Enterprise **£14.99**

RESIN SCULPTURES

These large scale ships from Enesco are ideal display pieces. Each is around 8" long and mounted on a base of the ships insignia. All feature high detail and are colour painted.



Enterprise 1701-D **£29.95**



N.G. Klingon Bird of Prey ... **£29.95**

CALENDARS

Classic Trek 1995 ..... **£8.99**

Next Generation 1995 ..... **£8.99**

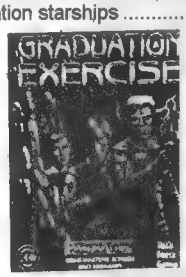
Deep Space Nine 1995 ..... **£8.99**

STAR TREK ROLE PLAYING

Star Fleet Battles is set in the Star Trek universe (original series) and gives you command of your own starship in battle.

Star Fleet Battles Basic Set Contains everything to start playing immediately **£24.99**
Star Fleet Battles Advanced Missions - contains more alien races etc. **£24.99**

Captain's Log is an 80 page journal which contains fiction, tactics, background material & scenarios for SFB games. The following issues are available:
Captain's Log #8 ..... **£7.99**
Captain's Log #9 ..... **£7.99**
Captain's Log #10 - containing original fiction & three SFB bumper stickers **£7.99**
Captains Log #11 ..... **£7.99**
Captain's Log #15 ..... **£7.99**
Prime Directive - 144 page perfect bound book. Players take the roles of Prime Team members - elite landing parties aboard Federation starships **£17.99**



Graduation Exercise - simulates the final exam for NeoPrimes as they prepare to graduate **£6.50**

GRAPHIC NOVELS

Star Trek has featured in comics since the first TV series aired in the 60's. Now there is a wide range of comics material containg exciting new adventures.

Mirror Universe Saga - more adventures from the alternate universe **£13.95**

GRAPHIC NOVELS

Star Trek: Debt of Honour - when Kirk discovers that the entire galaxy is threatened, he assembles a covert strike team with the Enterprise alongside both Klingons & Romulans in order to thwart the invaders (hardcover) **£11.99**
Who Killed Captain Kirk - the crew of the Enterprise investigate the apparent assasination of Captain Kirk **£9.99**

LAST MINUTE ADDITIONS

Star Trek: The Game
Classic trivia game based on the original TV series and all 6 Trek movies **£34.99**
Next Generation Game
A game of trivia, exploration & discovery. Search for new life & civilisations in this entertaining game **£34.99**
Next Generation Logo featured on mini laser etched disc **£3.50**
Next Generation LCD hand-held video game **£23.95**
Enterprise 1701-D Chromart Print **£10.99**
Mini Plates - all featuring detailed painted artwork:
McCoy **£6.99**
Chekov **£6.99**
Scotty **£6.99**
Troi **£6.99**
Large Plates:
Scotty **£29.95**
Sulu **£29.95**
McCoy **£29.95**
Deep Space Nine Station Hologram **£19.95**

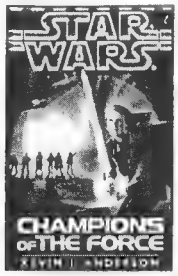
Original Enterprise Figurine
Mounted on a black plastic base this superbly detailed ship features Star Trek music and the voice of William Shatner speaking the legendary opening lines **£89.95**

ATTENTION TREK FANS... FOR ALL THE LATEST PRODUCT NEWS ON STAR TREK: VOYAGER, DEEP SPACE NINE & NEXT GENERATION MOVIES, GET ON OUR MAILING LIST NOW!

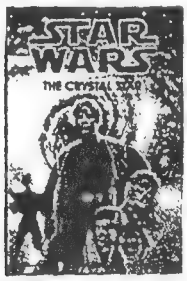
STAR WARS . BOOKS . MAGAZINES . MERCHANDISE . MEMORABILIA . MODEL KITS

NOVELS

Jedi Academy #2:
Dark Apprentice **£3.99**



Jedi Academy #3:
Champions of the Force
Dramatic conclusion to this great new trilogy of novels **£3.99**
Splinter Of The Minds Eye
Reprinted at last. The first non-movie Star Wars novel featuring Luke, Leia & Darth Vader some-time between A New Hope & The Empire Strikes Back **£4.50**



Crystal Star
New hardcover novel £11.99
Courtship Of Princess Leia
Leia faces temptation and Luke confronts a deadly new user of the Force (h/c) **£9.99**

Audio Novels

Last Command
read by Anthony Daniels **£14.99**
Heir To The Empire
read by Denis Lawson **£14.99**
Jedi Search
read by Anthony Head **£14.95**

MAGAZINES

Star Wars Insider #2
news on the new Star Wars films, merchandise and updates on Lucasfilm projects **£3.00**

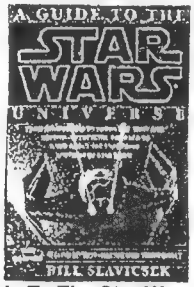
Star Wars Galaxy Magazine #2
In addition to the usual comprehensive Star Wars coverage this deluxe version features fold out Millenium Falcon poster, Star Wars Mastervision preview card and more! **£3.75**

MAGAZINES

Star Wars Technical Journal 3
Th e third in a three part series detailing various aspects of the Star Wars universe. available December **£6.99**

BOOKS

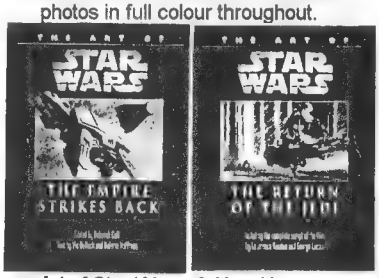
George Lucas:Creative Impulse
Covers the first 20 years of Lucasfilm. Beautifully produced and illustrated **£19.99**
Industrial Light & Magic
Fabulous book charting the work of ILN from Star Wars to Indianna Jones & beyond. Full colour throughout, printed on heavy glossy stock paper, several gate-fold pages. Hundreds of exclusive photographs.
Highly recommended **£50.00**



A Guide To The Star Wars Universe (2nd edition) - complete Star Wars reference covers everything including the new Tim Zahn trilogy **£10.95**
New Visions:Art Of The Star Wars Galaxy - Collecting over 70 of the 1st series of Star Wars Galaxy trading cards and printed in full page versions with support-ing text by artists and an introduc-tion by George Lucas **£14.99**
Art of Star Wars Galaxy 2
Collection of images from the 2nd hit trading card series £16.99

The Art of Star Wars

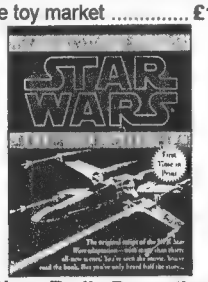
Long out of print these books make a welcome return. Each features sketches, costume designs, storyboards & behind the scenes photos in full colour throughout.



Art of Star Wars: A New Hope - also contains complete original film script **£17.99**
Art of Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back **£17.99**
Art of Star Wars: Return of the Jedi - contains full script **£17.99**

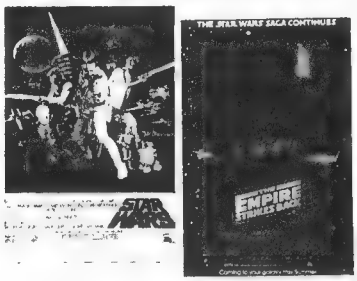
BOOKS

Star Wars: From Concept To Screen To Collectible - traces the transormation of Star Wars characters & ships from early concepts through production and into the toy market **£14.99**



Star Wars: Radio Dramatisation contains the complete original scripts for the 13 episode adaptation. Also contains original b/w sketches **£10.99**

POSTERS



Star Wars Movie Poster **£4.95**
Empire Strikes Back **£4.95**
Return of the Jedi **£4.95**
Star Wars/Empire/Jedi Triple Bill Poster **£4.95**

15th Anniversary Serrigraph Poster - Excellent original art by Melanie Taylor Kent **£17.95**

SOUNDTRACKS

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STAR WARS . PINS . PEWTER FIGURES. GRAPHIC NOVELS

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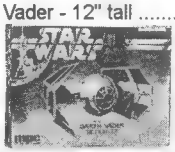

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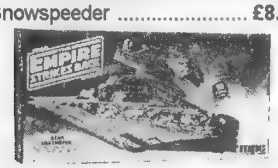

Star Destroyer **£9.99**
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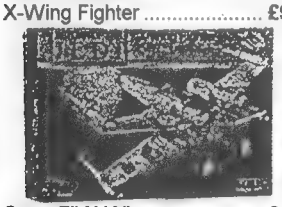

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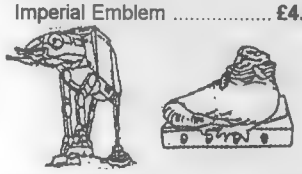

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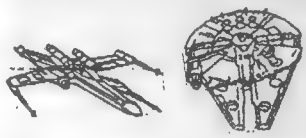

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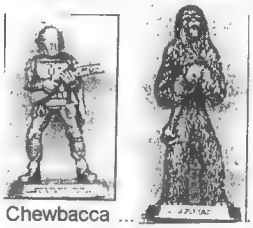

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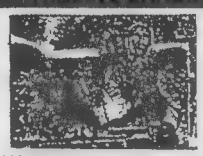

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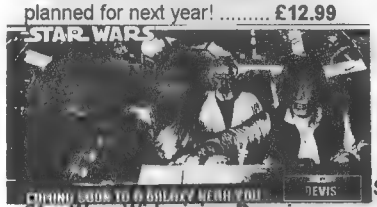

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IMAGE

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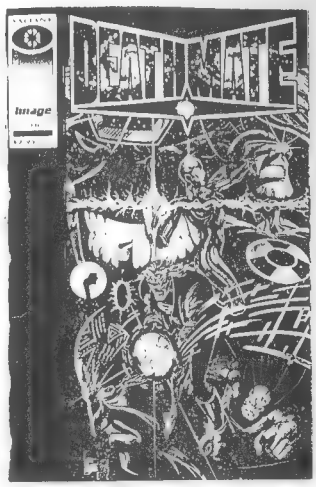

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

NM = Near Mint VF = Very Fine F = Fine VG = Very Good G = Good FA = Fair

DC

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80 VG £95
89 VG+ PC OUT FC £77
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197 VG £40
201 VG £45
209 VG £28
217 VG- £26
218 F+ £58
224 F+ £44
226 F/VF £49
231 G+ £15
233 VF £80
242 VG- NOC £66
249 VG/F £28
250 VG/F £28
251 VG/F £28
257 VG £46
258 VG/F £17
260 G/VG £10
261 VG/F £19
264 VG/F £15
265 VG+ £14
266 F/VF £22
267 VG- PIECE OUT BC £40
272 VG+ 1 IN TR BC £10
274 VG+ 1 PC OUT BC £10
275 VG+ £12
276 FA/G £11
278 VG/F £12
279 VG £10
280 F £15
281 VG £10

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44 VG+ 1/2 IN TR FC £800
48 VF (R) £3300
58 VG/F (R) £198
114 F+ £126
116 F- £96
119 F/VF £139
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138 F+ £93
157 F- £89
160 F £50
161 VG/F £89
168 VG/F £46
173 VF 3 SM TR BC £100
186 F+ 2 CHIPS BC £46
205 VG+ £37
208 VG £55

ADVENTURE

215 VF CREASES BC £26
218 F+ £60
222 VF £66
226 F+ £53
228 F/VF £53
229 VG/F £36
230 F+ £53
239 F+ £53
241 F+ £53
243 VF- £60
245 F/VF £60
245 FA+ £12
248 F/VF £60
248 F/VF £40
249 F+ £37
250 F+ £37
252 F+ £37
255 VG- £16
255 VF+ £60
257 F/VF £35
257 VG- £13
259 VG+ £20
261 VG/F £17
263 F- £17
263 VG £12
263 F £20
264 VG/F £19
265 FA- £23
265 VG/F 1/2 IN TR BC £16
266 VF- £26
266 F £20
267 VG/F £165
267 G- £46
267 VG- £106
268 VG £14
268 F £20
268 VG £14
268 VF £37
269 FA+ £12
269 F- £35
270 F+ £24
271 G+ £25
271 FA/G £11
271 VG- £24
272 VG+ £14
273 VG+ £14
273 F+ £18
276 F- £14
278 VF- £23
279 VG/F £15
282 F+ £38
284 VG/F £12
301 VG £16
303 F/VF £23

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9 VG+ £15
9 G/VG £10
9 F+ £28
9 G/VG £12
13 VG+ £12
14 VG/F £14

ATOM

15 VG/F £11
29 VG- £16
37 NM £22

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24 VG/F £182
26 FA £60
43 VF 2 CHIPS OUT BC £231
53 VG+ £96
72 F £105
79 VG NOC £63
82 VG+ 1 IN TR FC £80
83 VG £73
85 VG+ £66
88 F/VF £99
88 VG+ £70
101 VG+ £60
102 VG+ £60
105 G- £28
106 VF 1/2 IN TR FC £86
109 VF- £106
117 G £17
119 F/VF £66
120 G/VG £60
126 F+ £40
128 VG+ £30
142 F+ £28
143 VF £46
147 F £20
149 VG £10
160 VG/F £11
161 VG+ £14
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168 VF £28
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28 VF (R) £792
28 F/VF £1122
29 F/VF £594
29 F- £278
29 FA £56
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32 F £30
34 FA+ £66
35 F £89
38 VG £16
41 F/VF £32
42 VF+ £73
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58 F/VF £18
61 VF+ £40
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14 F £38
15 F+ £37
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22 F £18
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78 VG LOOSE COVER £92
117 VG/F 1 PC TAPE SP £93
121 VG- CFO £33
125 VG PIECE OUT BC £73
127 VG+ £86
128 VG- £99
139 VG £73
141 F 2 CHIPS OUT FC £86
162 VG £73
163 VG £73
166 VG- £66
172 F/VF £145
173 VG/F £108
176 VG+ £98
190 VG+ 2 SM PC OUT BC £84
201 VG- £46
202 VG/F £70
205 VG- £70
212 VG £50
212 VG+ £53
214 F/VF £120
215 G/VG £40
219 VG/F £53
223 VG/F £53
228 VG/F 1/2 IN SPS £73
233 VG 1 IN TR BC £135
238 F- £60
241 VF £93
242 F/VF £60
246 VF £90
250 F- £53
259 F- £47
288 VG- 1 IN TR 1 PG £10
293 VG+ £16
294 VG+ £16
354 VF £14
357 VF £14

FLASH

105 F- £594
106 F/VF £278
109 VG/F £125
110 VG/F 1/2 IN TR BC £158
113G/VG £35
117 VG/F £40
131 VG+ £16
133 VG+ £17
137 G+ £28
138 F- £19
139 G/VG £12
140 F/VF £30
148 VG £10
155 F+ £12
169 VF+ £35
176 NM £14
196 VF £12
AN1 G/VG £34
AN 1 VG £40

GREEN LANTERN

1 F+ £594
2 VG+ £119
2 G/VG £79
3 VG- £52
3 VG+ £60
5 G/VG £35
5 VG £46
9 VG £28
9 VG- £26
10 VG £28
12 VG/F £28
12 VF £69
14 VG/F £28
17 F+ £34
18 F- £21
22 VG £16
23 F/VF £30
23 VG £16
24 VG/F £21
24 G+ £10
25 F £23
25 VG £16
26 VF £50
27 VG £16
28 F £26
29 F/VF £30
31 G/VG £10
31 VF £40
32 VG £14
33 VF £39
33 G/VG £10
33 F+ £24
34 G/VG £10
35 VF £40
36 G/VG £11
37 F- £18
38 VG £14
39 VF £33
39 F+ £24
40 VG+ £78
40 G+ £36
42 VG+ £11

GREEN LANTERN

43 VF £26
44 VG+ £12
45 NM £53
45 VG/F £15
47 VF £26
48 VF £25
48 F £14
50 VF+ £32
56 VF- £12
57 VF £14
58 F+ £10
59 F+ £46
59 G/VG £17
59 VF/NM £99
59 F/VF LOOSE BOTTOM STAPLE £40
60 NM £16
62 VF £11
64 VF £11
66 VF £11
66 VF/NM £12
67 VF+ £14
71 VF/NM £11
76 F/VF £50
76 F- £28
85 VF+ £24

HOUSE OF MYSTERY

8 G/VG £21
10 VG+ £36
10 G £14
15 VF LOOSE BOTTOM STAPLE £66
59 VF £21
148 F/VF £14
151 NM £30
152 VF+ £20
152 F/VF £15
153 NM £45
153 F+ £12
154 VF/NM £24
155 NM £30
156 F+ £12
157 NM+ £36
157 NM- £26
159 NM+ £43
162 VF/NM £17
164 VF+ £16
167 VF+ £16

HOUSE OF SECRETS

6 VF £59
16 VG+ £12
20 VG+ £12
31 F+ £12
69 F- £10
72 VF+ £20
78 VF/NM £13
79 VF £16

JUSTICE LEAGUE

1 G/VG £250
2 VG £86
2 VG/F £125
2 FA £28
3 G/VG £50
3 VG £60
3 VG+ £80
4 VG/F £70
7 G £16
8 VG/F £36
10 VG/F £47
10 FA £10
13 VG+ £35
13 G/VG £19
14 G £10
14 VG- £20
15 G £12
16 G+ £10
16 G/VG £14
16 VG £18
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17 VG £17
19 F £26
19 G/VG £14
20 VG- £16
20 F- £26
20 VG £18
22 VG £28
24 F+ £19
24 VG £10
25 F+ £16
26 VG £10
26 F £15
28 VG/F £16
32 NM+ £28
41 VF £12
43 VF/NM £12
49 VF/NM £10

METAL MEN

1 VG- £48
2 G/VG £12
3 VG+ £14
3 F+ £28
5 F- £22
6 VG/F £22
9 VF- £18

MY GREATEST ADVENTURE

8 VG £25
7 FA/G £12
8 VG/F £36
11 VG £18
19 VG+ 1 IN TR 1 PG £19
20 VG/F £30
21 F £20
24 VF £36
25 G/VG £10
31 VG/F £12
33 VG+ £11
76 VG- £10
77 VF+ £12

MY GREATEST ADVENTURE

77 NM+ £17
82 F/VF £33
82 VG- £15
82 VG £16
83 VG+ £21
83 VF £53
83 VG+ £21
84 VF £53

MYSTERY IN SPACE

2 G/VG CHIP OUT BC £80
3 VG £85
4 FA- £17
5 G+ £43
6 VF- £138
7 FA- £15
8 G/VG £43
9 FA+ £23
11 F+ £73
12 G/VG £30
13 G+ £25
13 VG+ 1 IN TR BC £36
15 G/VG £30
16 VG £33
16 FA £12
25 VG- £30
30 VG+ £20
30 VG/F 1/2 IN TR BC £24
31 VG/F £26
35 VG £24
35 F+ £36
35 G/VG £12
40 VG £24
41 F- £24
44 G/VG £12
45 VF- £46
46 VG- £16
47 F/VF £33
48 VG- £15
50 VG- £16
51 F/VF £36
51 VG/F £19
53 VG+ £198
58 F- £30
67 F+ 1 PC TAPE BC £16
71 VG £14
75 VG+ £37
79 VF £30

SGT BILKO

2 VF/NM £132
3 NM- £112
5 NM+ £138
15 VG+ £21

SHOWCASE

4 VG £2500
22 VF (R) £660
26 G+ £18
27 VG- £53
28 F- £56
29 G+ £23
30 G/VG £35
31 VG+ £46
35 G+ £60
37 VG £72
40 VG £40
41 VG- £12
43 F+ LOOSE TOP STAPLE £92
45 VG- £17
73 F+ £22
74 VF+ £25
75 VG/F £18
83 VF £23

STRANGE ADVENTURES

2 NM £594
2 VG+ £119
4 FA/G £33
5 G/VG £50
5 F 1 IN SPS, CHIP OUT BC £82
7 VG- 1 IN TR BC ... £56
7 F- £89
8 G+ £40
13 F- £88
16 F/VF £105
17 VF+ SM TR BC £158
18 VG+ £62
19 F+ £72
22 VF- £99
22 G £17
23 F £53
25 F £52
28 F £50
28 VG/F £43
29 F- £40
31 F- £48
36 VG £32
43 F+ £53
45 VG/F £36
46 F- £36
47 F/VF £50
63 VG+ £19
73 F/VF £21
74 VG+ CHIP OUT BC £12
75 VG/F £15
76 F- £15
81 F- CHIP OUT BC £12
81 VG+ £14
84 VG/F £15
85 VG+ £14
[illegible] VG £11
87 VG/F £15
88 VG £11
92 VG £12
94 VG+ £12
[illegible] VG/F £15
180 FA+ £15
180 VG £37
190 VG- £20

SUPERBOY

20 F- £52
27 G- £14
29 F £43
31 G+ £15
33 VG £23
36 VG+ £30
42 VG/F 1/3 IN TR BC £21
48 G+ £10
51 VG/F £19
54 VG NOC £12
60 F/VF £30
67 F/VF £23
68 VG £59
70 VF £30
72 VG+ £15
75 VF- £22
82 VF £28
83 VG £11
89 G/VG £22
100 VG+ £30

SUPERMAN

7 VG/F 1 IN SPS ... £430
17 VG £182
19 G+ £105
22 VG/F £180
26 FA/G £55
36 VG+ £132
36 VG £120
38 VG- £92
38 VG+ £100
40 VG £88
40 F WRITING FC .. £93
41 VG+ £98
42 VG/F SM PC OUT FC £85
44 G/VG £56
53 VG £230
76 VG+ £211
82 VG/F CHIP OUT BC £60
84 G/VG £33
85 F- £60
87 F- £62
89 VG+ £56
89 F- £62
89 VG £43
90 F+ SM TR FC £79
91 VG+ £37
92 F £50
93 VG/F 1/2 IN TR BC, CHIPS BC £40
95 VF- £120
95 G £20

SUPERMAN

97 VG/F CHIP OUT BC £46
108 F/VF £73
109 G+ £20
111 VG+ £37
112 F+ £53
115 F- £40
115 VG+ £30
116 G/VG £23
118 F/VF £60
128 VG+ £26
132 VG/F £20
133 VG+ £22
134 VG+ £22
135 VG £16
136 VG+ £22
136 F- £23
137 VG+ £22
137 VG £14
137 G+ £10
138 F £23
138 VG- £15
138 VG/F £23
138 F- £23
139 F/VF £35
139 VG+ £22
139 G+ £10
139 VG+ £18
147 VG+ £22
148 F £18
163 VF £15
177 VF/NM £18
177 VF £15
178 NM+ £23
178 VF/NM £15
179 NM+ £23
179 VF £15
180 NM- £20
184 NM- £14
185 VF+ £12
190 VF £10
190 VF/NM £12
191 VF+ £12
192 NM+ £16
194 NM £14
198 VF/NM £12
199 F+ £46
AN2 VF- £62
AN7 VF+ £38

WORLD'S FINEST

26 VG+ PC OUT BC £60
68 VG- 1 PC TAPE INSIDE FC £53
78 VG £35
94 F+ 1 IN TR BC . £105
111 VG/F £15
111 VG+ £11
111 F+ £19
112 VF £29
116 VG/F £17
120 VG+ £15
121 VG £10
132 VF £15
140 VF £15
156 F+ £20

MARVELS

AMAZING FANTASY

15 VF (R) £2450
15 F/VF CHIPS ... £2100
15 F- CHIPS £1540

AVENGERS

1 VF+ TRIMMED .. £594
1 G- £112
1 FA/P £54
2 VF £198
5 F £49
5 VF- £86
7 F £30
7 VG/F £26
7 VG- £18
8 VG+ £22
9 F+ £48
10 VG+ £23
10 F+ £36
10 VF/NM £80
10 VG £22
10 F £30
10 G £12
11 VF- £56
11 F+ £48
12 VF £50
12 F+ £35
13 VG/F £17
13 VG- £12
13 VG £15
13 VF/NM £30
13 VF £25
13 VG+ £20
14 VF/NM £50
14 F/VF £40
14 F- £20
14 NM £70
15 F £22
15 VG- £14
15 NM- £63
17 VF/NM £27
17 VG+ £18
18 VG+ £10
18 VF+ £35
18 VF- £33
18 VF £35
19 F £18
19 VG+ £15
21 F- £12
21 VG+ £10
21 F- £11
22 F+ £15
22 F/VF £11
22 F £10
23 VF- £12

AVENGERS

24 VF/NM £15
24 VF £12
24 VF+ £16
25 F/VF £11
26 NM- £17
26 VF/NM £15
27 VF/NM £15
29 VF+ £16
29 VF £14
29 F+ £10
30 NM- £19
31 VF+ £12
AN1 VG+ £12

DAREDEVIL

1 VG+ £250
1 G- £115
1 FA/G £98
2 VF- £130
3 VG £40
3 VG+ £53
4 VF £73
5 VG/F £37
6 VG/F £25
7 VG- £18
8 VG £18
8 VG/F £25
9 F/VF £30
9 VG £14
9 G/VG £11
9 VG/F £25
10 F/VF £37
10 F- £18
10 VG- £21
10 VF £35
11 VF £23
11 VF- £23
12 VG/F £16
13 VG/F £15
14 VG/F £15
16 F/VF £30
17 VF £35
17 F+ £24
17 F £20
18 VG+ £12
19 VF £26
19 VG/F £12
19 VG+ £11
19 VG £10
20 F £10
20 F- £11
20 VG+ £10
21 NM £21
21 VF+ £15
21 VF- £13
22 VF £12
22 VF- £10
24 NM £22
26 NM £19
28 VF/NM £16
28 F+ £10
29 VF £10
35 VF/NM £11
37 VF £10
53 VF/NM £12
AN 1 VF/NM £14

DOCTOR STRANGE

170 VF £18
171 F- £10
173 VF+ £18
177 VF £18
181 F+ £12
182 VF £14
182 F+ £12
183 VF £14

FANTASTIC FOUR

1 F 2 PC TAPE FL £1716
1 VG £1320
3 F £295
5 F £462
7 VG/F STICKER ON PRICE £80
8 FA- £28
9 F/VF £185
9 VG/F £140
10 NM- £363
13 VG+ £80
14 F- £83
15 F £53
17 VG/F CHIP OUT BC £53
19 F+ £70
19 VF/NM £145
20 VG- £37
20 G/VG £30
20 VG/F £40
23 VF/NM £63
23 G+ £10
24 VF £46
24 VG- £16
28 F £73
28 VG- £46
28 VG £22
33 VF £26
34 VF £26
34 VG+ £15
35 VF- £28
35 VF/NM £35
36 VG/F £16
37 F £18
37 VF £23
38 VF- £30
38 VG+ £15
40 VF £21
40 F £17
41 VG/F £12
42 F- £12
43 VF £20
43 VG+ £12
44 F+ £17
45 VG/F £12
46 VF £18

FANTASTIC FOUR

47 NM- £26
47 VF- £17
49 VG £19
53 VF £21
54 VF+ £17
55 VF £21
58 F/VF £18
59 F+ £16
60 F/VF £17
60 VF £15
62 F/VF £11
62 VF £15
63 VF/NM £18
66 VG/F £23
67 VF- £50
68 VF/NM £18
69 VF- £12
77 VF+ £12
77 VF- £11
AN2 VF/NM £145
AN2 VF+ £120
AN2 VG+ £33
AN4 VG/F £15

SPIDER-MAN

1 FA+ £462
2 FA/P £112
10 VF £225
12 VF £152
14 NM- £880
14 VG+ £231
15 FA £19
17 G- £33
18 G £21
24 VG £23
26 FA/G £15
27 VG £26
27 VG £30
27 VG+ £40
27 G+ £18
29 VG £22
29 VG/F £35
29 G+ £15
30 VF £56
30 VF- £46
30 F+ £39
37 VF £35
38 VF £43
38 VG/F £23
39 VG+ £30
39 G £11
40 G+ £18
41 G/VG £10
41 F- £43
42 VF+ £48
46 VF £25
47 VG £11
48 VF £23
48 VG/F £16
50 VG/F £66
53 F £13
53 VG/F £11
56 VF £19
57 NM £33
58 VF+ £26
59 VF/NM £22
59 VF £22
63 F £10
64 VF+ £21
64 VF £18
65 VF+ £21
67 VF+ £17
67 VF £15
67 F £10
67 F/VF £16
68 F+ £12
68 F £10
70 VF £16
70 VF- £15
71 VF- £15
73 F- £10
74 VF £17
76 F/VF £12
82 NM- £22
82 VF £16
83 VF £10
84 NM £23
88 VF £16
89 NM- £22
91 VF £15
91 VF+ £18
98 VG £14
99 VF £12
105 VF/NM £11
108 VF/NM £11
109 NM- £15
109 VF £11
115 VF/NM £14
117 VF/NM £10
117 VF+ £10
119 NM- £19
121 VF £42
126 NM- £16
126 VF/NM £11
126 VF/NM £12
127 NM £14
127 VF/NM £12
128 NM £14
129 VG+ £70
130 NM+ £13
132 NM+ £13
132 VF+ £11
133 VF/NM £11
135 F+ £27
AN2 G £11
AN3 VF+ £27
AN5 VF+ £30

STRANGE TALES

103 VF- £72
103 G/VG £20
108 G/VG £14
109 VG/F £20
109 F+ £37
111 F 1/2 IN TR FC . £66
114 VF- £92

STRANGE TALES

115 VG+ £65
115 F/VF £145
126 VG/F £12
128 F+ £12
129 VF £15
131 VF £10
131 VG/F £10
132 F+ £12
133 VG/F £10
134 VG/F £10
137 VF £10
141 VF/NM £15
142 VF £10
143 VF £12
144 VF £10
144 VF/NM £15
146 VF £10
147 VF £11
149 NM- £15
149 NM £10
150 VF/NM £12
152 VF £10
168 VF+ £15

SUB MARINER

2 F/VF £22
3 NM+ £18
4 VF £12
5 NM- £16
6 NM £17
6 VF £11

TALES OF SUSPENSE

39 VG- £365
40 FA £60
41 F+ CHIP OUT BC £85
41 G/VG £72
49 VF- £52
49 VG+ £26
54 VG/F £14
55 VF- £24
61 F+ £18
65 VF+ £48
66 NM £59
73 VF+ £18
74 NM £26
75 VF/NM £24
75 VF- £15
76 VF+ £21
77 VF/NM £20
80 VF+ £18
81 VF £17
82 VF/NM £17
82 F/VF £12
83 VF+ £19
83 VG/F £10
83 NM £25
83 VF+ £18
83 VG/F £10
84 VF+ £20
84 VF £17
85 VF £18
85 F+ £15
87 VF/NM £20
87 VF/NM £22
89 NM £22
90 F- £10
96 VF £10
96 NM £20
96 VF+ £18
97 F- £10
98 VF £17
99 F+ £22

TALES TO ASTONISH

38 F- 356
43 VG+ £30
51 F- £16
52 VG+ £16
55 F/VF £26
55 VG+ £12
56 VG+ £10
58 VG+ NOC £12
59 VF+ £59
60 VG £23
64 VG+ £11
65 F £15
65 F+ £18
66 VG+ £11
67 F+ £11
68 VF £21
69 F+ £12
69 VF £21
72 VF £14
73 F £10
74 VF+ £17
75 VF/NM £15
79 VF £12
79 F £10
80 VF+ £10
81 VF £11
83 VF £10
84 VF/NM £15
84 VF+ £15
85 NM £23
85 VF/NM £18
85 F/VF £14
86 VF £10
87 VF+ £18
87 VF £18
88 VF £15
89 VF £12
97 VF £17
98 NM- £20
99 VF £15
100 VF+ £24

THOR

100 VG/F £18
110 F/VF £18
110 VF+ £29
113 F/VF £15
113 VF+ £22
114 VF £20
116 F/VF £20
117 F- £12
117 VG £10
118 VG+ £12
119 VG+ £10
120 F £11
120 VF+ £23
120 VF £19
121 F- £12
122 VF £23
122 VF/NM £22
123 NM £35
124 NM £36
124 VF £17
125 VG+ £12
125 VG/F £11
126 VG £16
127 VF/NM £17
128 VF/NM £22
128 F/VF £10
129 VF/NM £17
129 NM- £23
129 VF+ £22
130 VF £12
131 F+ £16
132 VF/NM £16
132 F/VF £16
132 VF+ £20
133 VF/NM £22
134 VF+ £26
135 VF+ £20
136 F/VF £10
138 VF/NM £17
139 VF/NM £22
140 VF/NM £17
147 NM- £17
147 VF+ £15
149 VF £15
151 VF+ £15
151 VF £12
153 NM £18
153 VF/NM £10
154 NM £18
155 VF £10
157 VF+ £15
158 VF £28
158 F+ £22
159 NM- £17
173 NM- £11

X-MEN

1 F+ £924
1 VG- £365
2 VG £132
8 VG+ £35
10 VF/NM £89
15 VG £18
15 F £22
17 VG/F £16
18 VF+ £35
18 VG+ £15
19 VF/NM £40
19 VG/F £16
19 F- £16
19 VF- £28
19 F £16
20 VG- £11
20 VG £12
21 VG+ £12
22 F+ £21
22 F- £15
22 VF £23
23 VF/NM £35
24 VG/F £15
25 VF £25
26 F/VF £20
26 F £15
27 VG £10
27 F+ £18
29 F- £15
30 F/VF £20
30 VG+ £10
31 VG/F £10
31 NM £28
32 VG+ £10
32 VF £16
33 VG/F £10
34 VF/NM £20
36 VF/NM £22
36 VF+ £19
36 F+ £11
37 VF/NM £20
37 VG/F £10
38 VG/F £16
39 VG/F £16
40 NM £29
40 VG/F £10
40 NM £26
47 F/VF £11
51 F/VF £12
51 F+ £12
55 VF+ £16
56 NM+ £32
56 VF NAME ON BC £14
61 VF £20
88 VF+ £11
94 NM £155
96 VF+ £22
95 VF+ £20
99 VF/NM £22
106 VF/NM £10
115 NM £10
120 VF £15

WESTERNS

BEST OF THE WEST

1 FA £14
3 VG- £16
4 VG- £16
4 VG+ £18

BEST OF THE WEST

5 VG/F £24
6 VG+ £40
7 VG £12
8 VG £14
8 VG/F £18
10 VG/F £18
11 VG/F £12
12 VG/F £18

JOHN WAYNE

3 VG- £56
4 F- £129
6 VF £180
7 VF £145
8 VG+ £88
19 VG- £28
27 VG- £40

LUCKY STAR

3 F/VF £14
4 F/VF £14
5 F/VF £14
6 VF £16

ROCKY LANE

4 VG- £17
8 VG £19
9 F/VF £28
10 VG/F £26
10 NM £57
11 F £22
12 F+ £28
13 VG+ £18
14 VG/F £19
14 VF/NM £34
15 VG- £14
16 VG+ £18
17 F+ £28
18 VG/F £20
19 F- £20
20 VG/F £20
21 VG/F £20
24 VG/F £20
25 VF/NM £30
38 VG- £12
61 F+ £12

ROY ROGERS

FC109 FA £12
FC117 VG- £24
FC124 VG/F £35
FC160 G/VG £15
5 G+ £17
6 VG £18
7 F £28
8 G+ £12
9 F+ £35
10 G/VG £14
11 VF- £28
14 VG £14
15 F £22
16 VG- NOC £10
18 VG/F £20
20 VG+ CHIP OUT BC £14
25 VG- £12
27 VG- £12
29 VG- £12
30 VG/F £18
36 F £15
40 VG/F £14
42 VG+ £11
43 VG+ NOC £12
45 F+ £14
52 VG/F £11
57 F/VF £14

WESTERN HERO

77 F/VF £18
81 F- £25
85 G+ SS £18
87 VG- £12
88 VG/F £18
90 VG+ £17
92 VG £14
93 VG/F £18
95 VG £17
98 VG £14

OTHER WESTERN TITLES AVAILABLE. PLEASE ASK

EC'S

CRIME PATROL

15 FA- £48

CRIME SUSPENSESTORIES

1 G+ £62
2 G- £26
2 VG £59
2 VG+ £72
3 G/VG PC OUT 3 PAGES £26
4 VG/F £52
6 G+ £18
7 VF £86
9 F/VF £83
9 G/VG PC OUT BC £17
13 G/VG £18
14 VG- £18
15 VG+ £24
16 VF £65
17 VG- £24
18 VG+ £24
19 G £10
25 VG+ £18
26 VG+ £18

FRONTLINE COMBAT

2 VG- £36
3 FA/G £12
8 VG £43

INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION

30 VG £33
31 FA £15
31 VG £35
32 FA £14
32 VG- £35

HAUNT OF FEAR

16 (#2) VG+ £171
5 VG/F £83
9 VG £43
11 VG+ £40
20 VG- £25
21 F- £24
21 VG/F CHIP OUT BC £23

MAD

8 VG+ £60
10 VG/F £65
15 VG £50
22 NM £125

SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES

2 F/VF £92
3 VG £33
9 VG- £24
15 G+ £11
16 VG £20
17 VG- £16

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

21 VG+ £132
22 G/VG £56
23 F- £83
29 VG- £47
34 F/VF £72
35 F+ £66

TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR

2 G/VG £63

TWO FISTED TALES

19 FA+ £26
19 FA £23
20 FA £16
21 VG- £22
22 FA £10
26 VG+ £22
27 VG+ £30

VALOR

2 VG+ £26
2 G/VG £20
3 VG- £15
4 VG+ £20
4 VG- £15
5 F £22

VAULT OF HORROR

13 G- £58
16 G/VG £43
17 G+ £26
22 VG- £30
23 F- £46
25 VG/F £46
27 F+ £46

WEIRD FANTASY

13 (#1) VG+ £178
15 (#3) VG+ £82
6 F £60
8 G/VG NAME ON COVER £23
8 F+ £73
11 F/VF SM STAIN BC £53
12 G+ £18
17 VG+ £36
21 F/VF £105
22 VG+ £30

WEIRD SCIENCE

15 (#4) VG/F £105
6 VG- £43
8 F+ £73
11 G/VG £24
12 FA PG TORN LOOSE £11
17 VG+ £36
18 FA+ £13
19 FA £15
20 F £65

WEIRD SCIENCE FANTASY

23 VG/F 1 IN SPS ... £40
29 VG/F £86

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***Comment** is a forum to enable fans and professionals alike to express their personal points of view on aspects of the comics industry.*

As such, the opinions stated do not necessarily reflect those of the publication, and space will be given in subsequent issues to opposing views. Editing of accepted manuscripts will be done only as a matter of grammar, clarity and space consideration.

Horses for courses...

Comment by Mike Kidson, Liverpool

THE EXCHANGE between Dez Skinn and Roger Langridge (**Comics International** #47, *Letters*) raises certain problems which it's high time were sorted out if debate about this medium is ever to stop getting snarled up in simple misunderstandings.

Regard this, if you will, as a preliminary attempt at identifying these problems, to which I hope others will respond.

To start with, there's the semantic confusion resulting from the fact that both the medium and its many differing productions are called by the same name: *comics*. "If you don't like comics, why are you still reading them?" asks Dez. "I love comics", replies Roger, and then goes on, inevitably, to explain that he just doesn't happen to like *mass market superhero comics* much any more, and that the *alternative comics* he does like aren't getting much coverage in **Comics International**.

Could it be that the development of the industry, for creators, publishers, retailers and readers, is being hampered by the simple lack of clear definition between varieties of production which is taken for granted in other cultural industries?

Look at the recording industry. In any week, the Sony Corporation might release a new recording of a Beethoven symphony, a new compilation of Miles Davis tracks and a new album by Bob Dylan (and much more). No-one at Sony would for a moment argue that since these all consist of music, are played by musicians, recorded by engineers and released on CDs, they should be sold exclusively in the same outlets and reviewed and advertised in the same magazines.

Yet this is exactly what happens in the comics industry. Unsurprisingly, the most popular kind of comics end up not only dominating the market; but very nearly monopolising it, starving other kinds of publicity and shelf space. Creators are thus faced with problems making a living if they desire to experiment. Distributors and retailers are deterred from stocking and promoting less profitable kinds of comics. Magazine editors are, at best, able to provide only limited coverage of alternative comics.

Surely what's needed is greater diversification, which can only be based on a broad acceptance of the different possibilities of the medium and a willingness to draw definitions between those possibilities if it is to succeed in commercial terms.

Roger's suggestion that **Comics International** should increase its coverage of alternatives does not go far enough, and Dez is quite right to disagree with it on the grounds that such a move would hurt the magazine's sales. What's needed is an alternative magazine, and that in turn needs support from the industry. As of January 1995, such a magazine will be available: Andy Brewer is contracting the name of his respected **Battleground** 'zine to **BG** and dropping all mainstream coverage. I hope that Roger and all others looking for alternative coverage will send him subscriptions and contributions, and generally support a brave venture.

Where both Roger and Dez, and the small press boosters and **The Comics Journal** and, let's face it, the majority of pundits and punters go wrong is in bringing subjective notions such as "elitism" into the matter. Elitism is defined by *qualitative* comparison, in this case the idea that some kinds of comics are definitively superior to others.

This kind of thinking is as much of a waste of time as comparing, say, Blur unfavourably with Bach *solely* on the grounds that both constitute music. Few would bother to make such a comparison — in music the subjective approach is generally left where it belongs, to the varying tastes of individuals who are given a clear choice on which to base those tastes.

If more people in the industry could be brought to focus on an objective truth too often obscured by marketing tactics — that, for example, **Eightball** is *not* betters than **Spawn** or **Spawn** better than **Eightball**, that both are simply *different* manifestations of the medium designed for *different* tastes — we might begin to progress towards the possibility of a wider range of tastes being catered for without loss, financial or artistic, for anyone.

What do you think? Yes, *you*.

The Vertigo masquerade

Comment by Ben Cooke, Southampton

VERTIGO: Lately this word has become a collective noun for all that is right with the comics industry. For every accusing finger pointed at Image's superficiality or Marvel's corporate prostitution, Vertigo stands as an instant rebuttal: an affirmation that, yes, something worthwhile can be done with the medium.

Within those hallowed halls, no experiment is too weird, no taboo unbreakable. Any character and any storyline is acceptable, as long as it is artistically justifiable. While DC sit back smugly and accept the credit, you can be sure that Marvel, poker-faced, is berating itself for not thinking of it first. What's your point, I hear you cry. Here it is: I

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believe that this attitude is unjustified. Big surprise, eh? Like the entire last paragraph wasn't one big lead up. But I digress.

It seems to me that there's no risk involved in Vertigo. Any experiment can be rationalised artistically by a fast enough talker (I'm an English Literature student, I know), which means all these talented British blokes can delve into the dusty garages of their imaginations for all those cool ideas they never thought they could use in this medium. Which is fine if the end product is a good read (like **Hellblazer**). But literacy and symbolism are no substitutes for a great story.

Just read Joseph Conrad's **Heart of Darkness** and you'll see what I mean. Slow, boring and relentlessly self-important; but so meaningful, deep and relevant to the Human Condition. I don't care how clever **Violent Cases** is — it's lifeless, boring and largely pointless. Gaiman's work on **The Sandman** is much better because it is fresh, exciting, poetic in a vibrant, captivating way, and makes for excellent reading.

Philip Larkin once wrote an essay about contemporary poets and how their status as both author and critic precluded any worthwhile criticism, because their answer would always be something like, "You obviously can't appreciate what I've created here". The same thing applies to Vertigo. With carte blanche to write whatever they like as long as it is artistically justified, Vertigo creators are immune to criticism. This isn't much of a problem at present, since story quality is generally good. But just look at what Neil Gaiman is getting away with in **The Sandman** at the moment — pure self-indulgence. It's a slippery slope...

I admire writers like Peter David and John Ostrander much more. David totally revitalised **The Incredible Hulk** for Marvel, and it looks like he's doing the same thing at DC with **Aquaman**. Ostrander's version of **The Spectre** is the best yet, and, two years on from its untimely cancellation, his **Suicide Squad** is still one of the best series ever. These guys, and others like them to a lesser extent (Scott Lobdell, Warren Ellis, D.G. Chichester) consistently turn out superior mainstream comics. In the mainstream everything does not go: plot, language, character, themes, complexity; all these things are limited by codes, publisher's guidelines, and pressure to conform.

With the limitations and boundaries they must work with and around, I think these writers deserve as much praise, if not more, than the unchained imaginations of Vertigo.

I'm sorry, I haven't a clue

Comment by Martin Shipp, Tottenham, London

THE Radio 4 panel game *I'm Sorry, I Haven't A Clue* often features a round of "Misleading Information for Tourists", including such advice for foreign visitors as 'when in London, be sure to use the open-air urinals in Trafalgar Square'.

In this tradition I present...

Misleading Information for Comics Fans:

1. As footballer Nicky Banger has decreed that his surname should be pronounced to rhyme with *danger*, all comic books with the word *danger* in their title should now have this word pronounced to rhyme with the slang word for *sausage*.

2. The back-issue value of a series begins to depreciate alarmingly when said book reaches the end of its run or is cancelled. You, the collector and speculator, cannot be sure that Marvel will pick up the **X-Men** titles where they left off after the **Alpha** storyline finishes. Best, then, to take all of your mutant collection down to your local store and accept the first offer, *no matter how low*.

3. As his more recent works have failed to reach the level of sales he would have wished, John Byrne will relaunch one of those series, with a greatly increased sexual content, under the title **Donger Unlimited**.

4. Being a small businessman can be a hard life, fraught with pitfalls. Because of this, all comic shop owners appreciate well-meaning advice. So, if Binky's Comics is sold out of your favourite title, Binky will be only too pleased if you point out that his ordering policy is all wrong. Such advice is as a rope thrown to a drowning man.

5. Many comic shops now offer 'added value' customer services, as do popular supermarket chains and the like. Among these services are:

Instant Credit: allowing you to spend up to £200 at once, simply by producing two forms of personal identification.

Sampling: allowing you to *taste* a comic by reading it in the shop before committing to a purchase — and don't forget not to make your choice before sampling the full range.

Refund and replace: if a book is not to your complete satisfaction, you not only get a replacement comic, but your original purchase price is refunded in full.

Ask your comic shop about these new services.

6. If you're at a convention, don't forget that many big name writers and artists have become used to their near-solitary life at the typewriter or drawing board, and as such find it hard to adjust to the hubbub and hurly burly of a crowded hall. Many of them, then, like to create their own quiet places where they can commune with their audience in relative tranquillity.

The most popular place for this is the lavatory, so if you should see one of your idols rushing into the toilets, it is only polite to follow him or her and to ask for a signature or sketch. Push the items you'd like signed under the door, if need be.

Your pile of comics will be a most welcome sight in that toilet cubicle!

In defence of diversity

Comment by Peter Ashton, Eastleigh, Hampshire

I READ Darren Mason's **Battleground** changeover opinion (**Comics International** #48, *Comment*) and found it disagreeable. How can this guy write this stuff, I thought. Doesn't he realise what Andy Brewer's been going through? Doesn't he realise what it takes to

put a fanzine like **Battleground** together? Then I realised that he can't because he doesn't know Andy. He only knows Andy Brewer as **Battleground** editor in the same way as I know Dez Skinn and Todd McFarlane. With this in mind his comment made interesting reading.

The thing to remember is that **Battleground** is a fanzine. It's produced by fans for fans and does not have to justify itself to the market to gain extra readers. If only 20 people read **Battleground**, it would be just as valid because it would reflect the views of its readers. Darren seems to be saying that the industry needs **Battleground** but only the parts of **Battleground** he wants. This is idiotic. How can a multi-million dollar industry possibly need a fanzine with a readership of under 1000?

There is no way you can put **Battleground** in the same context as **Comics International**. They are completely different publications with completely different aims. Producing a fanzine is done for the sheer *fun* of it, but Darren doesn't seem to be able to accept that having a good argument in the letters page can be fun. If there are arguments to be had they have to affect the whole industry and market place and they have to be important.

Battleground is a fanzine. It's produced by Andy Brewer because he enjoys doing a fanzine. If he decides he only wants to cover comics that interest him, then what is the problem? It's his fanzine! He's in charge! And above all, on the global scale of things, *it doesn't matter!*

If, as Darren says, the industry is crying out for a fandom-created magazine, then surely that says something about the industry rather than the fanzines. There is no possibility of **Battleground** changing the face of comics as we know them.

Comics International has that power, as do distributors Diamond and Capital City, but not a little fanzine.

It worries me slightly that Darren has this preoccupation with the "smug elitism" of the small press taking over fanzines and ruining them. I'm more concerned about the major publishers taking over comicdom as a whole and filling it with crap, but I don't go on about it.

Where does the small press power come from? I'm involved in the small press and I certainly don't feel very powerful! If you don't like the people who are ruining your idea of fandom then *do something about it!*

Start your own fanzine and see how pissed off you get when every Tom, Dick and Harry hails it as the new **Fantasy Advertiser** and then complains when you make it your own. Fanzines and small press comics are the ultimate in creative freedom because they are not dependent on sales or critical acclaim. Although success is nice when it happens, you always end up with the same people who praised you sticking the knife in a year or so later. If Andy wants to make himself the new Gary (**Comics Journal**) Groth then that's his decision, but I suspect you're wrong. Andy just wants to be Andy.

Thanks for doing these sections in **Comics International**, without them the world would be a poorer place. I mean that!

The freedom of choice

Comment by Andy Brewer, editor: Battleground, Salford

AFTER reading Darren Mason's letter about me and my fanzine, **Battleground**, I've come to the conclusion that he is unable to grasp the difference between a professional magazine and a fanzine. Allow me to enlighten him.

Comics International, as far as I'm aware, is Dez's livelihood. If he doesn't sell enough copies every month, the bills don't get paid. As such he's swapped the freedom to do whatever he wants with it in an attempt to make a living, and whether he wants to or not, he *has* to devote the greater part of **Comics International** to superheroes because his readership demands it.

If, however, in the unlikely event that everyone stopped buying superhero comics tomorrow and started reading underground comics instead, then **Comics International** would change to fill that need and superheroes would be relegated to a minor role.

What I'm trying to say is that Dez's personal reading habits don't really enter into it because he's running a business. (I would add that I'm not being holier than thou here, if I could make a living from **Battleground** on the backs of the **X-Men** and **Spawn**, I most certainly would do. I might not enjoy what I was doing, but I'd be quite unrepentant about spending the money!)

As it stands, **Battleground** is one of my hobbies. It's produced for anyone who wants to read it, and like all fanzine editors, I have the freedom to do what I want with it. If people don't like what I'm doing, then they can have their subscription money back, or not buy it in the first place. I don't really care either way, because high sales are of no importance to me. In fact, if it folded tomorrow I'd actually save money.

Superhero comics no longer interest me, so I made the decision that from now on, **Battleground** will no longer cover the superhero genre. Because of this, Darren Mason pops up and in an instant **Battleground** has gone from being "the best thing since **Fantasy Advertiser**" to being "self-opinionated and anal retentive", and I have become some deluded fool with a God complex.

All this because I've decided I'm not really interested in superheroes any more and if I'm going to spend my own money and use up a large chunk of my spare time to publish a fanzine, then it might as well be about the comics I'm interested in. Oh, the temerity of it all!

Fanzines are produced by *fans*, and as I've already pointed out, I'm no longer a fan of superhero comics. Is there some law that says that because I publish a fanzine about comics, then I must cover superheroes? Aren't fanzines by their very nature supposed to be about something the editor enjoys?

Why, in a field that is absolutely overflowing with superhero-based magazines, it is so wrong to want to do a 'zine about non-superhero titles? Darren's letter was one of persecution, as if my deciding to ignore superheroes was a threat to

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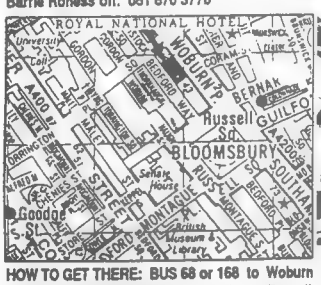

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all right-minded fans. What a load of bollox. I'm one person doing a small fanzine that barely sells enough to pay for the printing of the next issue.

But this is by the by because Darren's decided that my real reason for my changing **Battleground** is elitism. A knee jerk reaction if ever I heard one. Since when did the fact that I no longer share *his* interest in superheroes mean that I'm being elitist or consider superhero fans moronic? I would have thought that all it means is that I no longer share his interest in superheroes.

So what are you saying, Darren? I should publish a fanzine about something I'm not interested in? Perhaps I should do a 'zine about embroidery or show jumping or Take That? I mean, I'm not interested in those and God forbid that anyone whc publishes a fanzine should actually be a fan. Are you saying that out of the thousands of superhero fans in this country, someone like me, who has little interest in superheroes, is the only person qualified to do a fanzine? Darren, in my book, you're far more qualified to do it than I.

To set the record straight: I do not wish to be Jesus Christ, Gary Groth or Dez Skinn. **Battleground's** not changing because some alternative small press mafia has threatened to send the boys round if I don't; and it's not changing because I've suddenly decided that all superheroes and their fans are beneath my contempt. **Battleground** is changing because my tastes have changed.

Is that really so hard to grasp?

More than just a glorified comic mart

Comment by Frank Plowright and Hassan Yusuf, Rusty Staples, Glasgow, Scotland

EVERY year there seems to be a letter in **Comics International** from someone feeling they had a raw deal at the UK Comic Art Convention.

We usually reply to such complaints personally as perpetuating arguments via trade magazines always seems a bit tacky, but this year we feel it might help to address the points raised by Robin Dangerfield in public.

Let's start with his contention that UKCAC is "a big comic mart with some guests and a bar". Over 200 comic writers and artists attend UKCAC (half a dozen from the USA), of whom a good proportion appear on panels, sign autographs or draw sketches. How many creators do you see at a mart? Or American dealers for that matter? Do comic marts have any events? Throughout most of UKCAC there was a choice of two events and a signing session in addition to the publishers and dealers room. At times the choice swelled to three events, and to be pedantic, there were actually three bars. Using Robin Dangerfield's logic, the QE2 is just a rowboat with some bedrooms and a bar.

It would appear some people pay good money to attend a convention and then don't make the most of it.

We believe UKCAC does represent good value for money. As a **Comics International** reader, surely Robin saw the adverts for UKCAC and knows that it costs £15 if one applies in advance, not "twenty quid".

Let's look at other forms of entertainment. Football — a minimum of £10 for a 90 minute match. West End cinema — £6 for a ninety minute film. Concert — a minimum of £10 for a headliner and support lasting three hours if you're lucky.

£15 for an entire weekend of activities aimed at the comics fan seems like good value to us, and as the price hasn't risen in six years that £15 represents better and better value.

It's true that UKCAC doesn't compare with the larger American conventions, let alone the major European events. The size of the British comic market is less than 10% of the American market, and according to the last issue of **Comics International** that market has shrunk by half since last year.

Despite this, UKCAC94 was among the best attended we've held. It should also be pointed out that venue hire and hotel costs are far cheaper in the USA than here, yet the prices for UKCAC and major US conventions are comparable.

We'd also prefer that more publishers attend UKCAC regularly. European publishers perceive Britain as a backwater beneath their notice, and Britain may be 8% of the American publishers market, but I doubt many allocate 8% of their marketing budget here.

It would seem that over the years more and more conventions have sprung up in the USA, and by the time UKCAC rolls around in September convention budgets have expired. A partial solution we're considering is to shift UKCAC from an autumn event to late springtime from 1996.

If Robin's solution that we take an early bath was applied, we'd be back to the pre-1985 situation where there was no continuity between conventions, and for the previous two years there had been no London comic convention. Why would anyone bother organising a comic convention in Britain? UKCAC struggles to break even each year, so it wouldn't be for the money. Since UKCAC began, only America's Great Eastern Conventions have offered an alternative with their Alexandra Palace convention in 1992. It certainly fitted the description of "a glorified comic mart with some guests and a bar" more than UKCAC, and reportedly lost in the region of £25,000. Excuse us while we continue to do things differently over here.

We don't claim that UKCAC is faultless. We constantly ask our customers for their opinions and have quite often implemented suggestions when we could afford to.

We genuinely want to hear any and all constructive criticism of UKCAC to help improve it.

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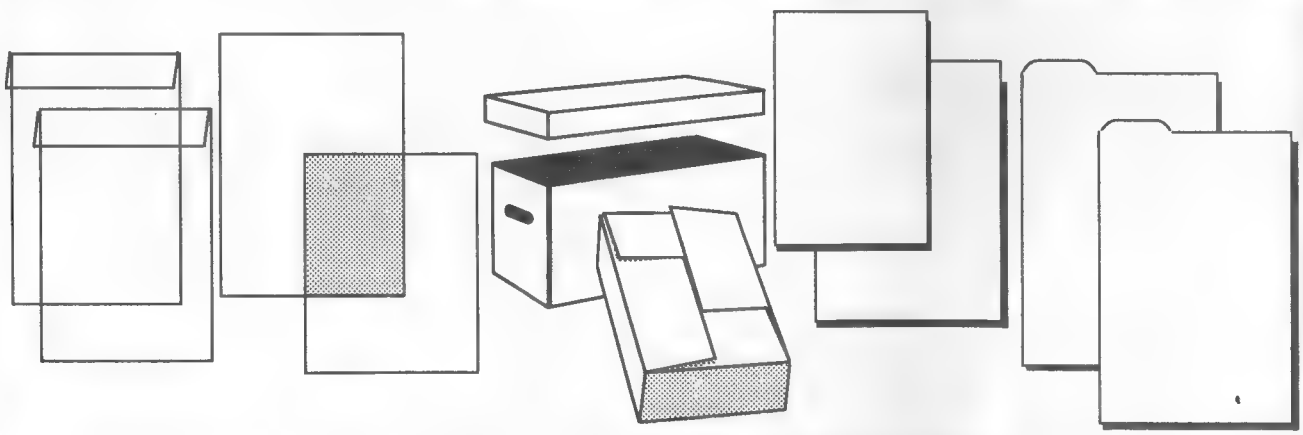

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Comics International invites you to submit your comics-related queries, both for your own enlightenment, and that of our general readership.

Ralph Horsley
23 Providence Ave, Leeds

I AM ONE of those poor struggling artist types who desperately tries to get any work into print. In the last eighteen months I have had the mixed fortune of managing to get a series of commissions from Illinois-based publisher Boneyard Press. This included two full length comic books and a couple of short stories.

However, I have now had no communication from Hat D. Fisher (Boneyard's publisher) for a number of months, his phone line has been disconnected and I have heard rumours that, after losing a court case, Boneyard Press has collapsed.

He still possesses my original artwork for the unnofficial Brandon Lee (of *The Crow* fame) comic book, and a short story *Remains*. I realise that it is unlikely that I will ever see these again, but was wondering if you had any definite information on the fate of this publisher.

Plus, if any readers out there have seen the above stories in any Boneyard Press publications could they please contact me.

Can you help?

The company's phone line may have been cut (or changed), but Boneyard is still publishing, with new titles are being both solicited and advertised in current distributor catalogues.

The sad moral to this story (failing a letter bringing results) is that working for publishers thousands of miles away can be dangerous! We're still waiting for royalties from Eclipse from 1989. Dez

Gary Rider
Flat 2, 56 Cobden St,
Bitterne Park, Southampton

YOU ran an article in **Comics International** #48 about two small press publications from Bristol: **Scenes From the Inside** by Drat 'n' Blast and **Bonafide** by Bonafide Productions. Could you please supply the necessary addresses so that I may get hold of a copy of each?

***Bonafide** (£1.50) can be contacted at 23 Albany Road, Montpellier, Bristol BS6 5LQ, all cheques made payable to Luke Fay. **Scenes from the Inside** (£2.75) is available from Box 63, 82 Colston Rd, Bristol BS1 5BB.*

Allan J. Palmer
97 Packenham Rd, Basingstoke

ONE comment I have to make about the *Comicbook Competition* question (iv) (**Comics International** #47): the interpretation of "...longest uninterupted run..." could have more than one meaning. I've gone for the longevity interpretation, ie **Detective Comics** with a first issue dated March 1937 — that's over 54 years. **Action Comics**, while having a higher number of issues (700+) didn't appear until June 1938, so that's only 53 years... and as I think about it, **Action Comics** has had an interupted run — twice — in 1986 at the Byrne revamp, and in 1993 during the *Death/Reign of Superman* series. After all that, you'll probably point out that there's another title which outstrips both those...

Could I also add a note re Robert Hoffman's **War of the Gods** enquiry in the same issue's *Q & A* column: DC's checklist card issued at the time lists 23 issues by month — this includes **Justice League Europe** #31, which **The Comic Book Price Guide** omits in their list (referring to it as an "unofficial" crossover). While there are 23 issues in the crossover, the highest number appearing on any of the issues is actually "24"; none of the issues are numbered 7, 8, 13, 14 or 21 and two issues are numbered "19"!

Finally, the sequence in which they are numbered bears no relation to the sequence listed on the DC checklist card, no wonder Robert is confused.

Impressed to see that **Comics International** continues on a regular schedule. It manages to retain a certain feel reminiscent of those days of the '70s and **Fantasy Advertsier** et al about it — which in my book is no bad thing. Anything special planned for the 50th issue?

I suppose if **Comics International** #50 was published by Marvel it would have enhanced covers with holograms, trading cards, embossed logo and be called *When Titans Clash*! (plus a price increase).

Re: Madam Fatal

Since asking for help last month, we've been inundated with information on the Quality Comics 1940s character Madam Fatal. The amount of correspondence rivals anything we've received and reassures us all that there is still a strong following for some pretty obscure stuff! Selected highlights follow ...

Peter C. Phillips of Oldham...

IN PARTIAL answer to Rob Hansen's query (**Comics International** #48, *Q&A*), my records show that Madam Fatal (aka Richard Stanton) appeared in **Crack Comics** 1-22 (May 1940 through March 1942). Though written by "Gordon", creation of the character is credited to series artist A. Pinajian. I suspect that he was the same A. Pinayan (despite different spelling) who worked for Centaur Publications in 1939. "Gordon" (was that a christian name or surname?) was also credited as artist/creator on *Invisible Justice* — another Quality Comics strip starring Kent Thurston as the Invisible Hood — which appeared in **Smash Comics** #1-32 (August 1939 to March 1942). It's somewhat significant that both strips were terminated in WW2 following the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

It would seem that Pinajian (or Pinayan) never returned to comics after the war though a "Gordon" did work for Toby Press in the mid-50s.

As for Madam Fatal her/himself, the only example I've seen depicted the character as a Plain-Jane Maiden Aunt type rather than an exotic femme fatale. Probably a subtle enough disguise for snaring handbag-snatching thieves if nothing else, although I suppose it could have been developed as a crime-fighting anti-nazi espionage feature.

However, given the innocence of comic books and the anti-nazi propaganda back then, little would have been made of the hero disguising himself as a woman. It was not unusual for screen villains to masquerade as women to carry out their murderous schemes, and the Madam Fatal feature would have been seen as little more than a variation on a theme.

Mind you, as Rob enquires, what would Vertigo do with this concept? It would no doubt be far removed from the original concept. I wonder if DC owns the rights to this character along with other Quality characters they purchased in the '50s?

R. G. Anyon of Fleetwood comments... The hero was a Shakespearean actor who, one night leaving the theatre in costume, came across a woman being mugged. He scared off the villain and the idea to dress in drag came to him.

To lure muggers to attack an apparently elderly lady (entrapment?) he dressed in drag using various wigs and make-up from his profession and carried a handbag containing his secret weapon — a housebrick! I think the strip ran in **Crack** #1-7. However, full info is in **Steranko's History of Comics Volume 2**. My copy is long gone and the above is from memory.

If Rob is still interested in transvestism in comics, he may want to check out **Tex Ranger**. This was a teenage western serial in **Rangers Comics** (Fiction House) 6-12 (I think, memory again).

Tex's companion was female (in male drag) and Tex was unaware of this. The issue I had was #8 (1942) and he was beginning to get unusual feelings about his little pal in buckskins! It's an interesting strip with good art.

I also have an uncommon question to ask: 20 years ago I bought a copy of **Magic Comics** 10 (Dec, 1940, David McKay Publications) in which I came across an advert for stamp approvals: the type common in our own comics, which mentioned stamps of a new country called Hatay. I have never been able to trace this state and would be grateful if any philatelic or obscure geographers among this esteemed publication's army of readers can give me any information about this forgotten country?

Arthur Ranson, a couple of issues back, was discussing the old British strip **Wolf of Kabul**. To jog his memory, the sidekick was Ali, whose battle cry was "Clicky-Ba!" which referred to the cricket bat he used to crack heads with on the North West Frontier in **Hotspur** comic.

Hatay is a small state in Southern Turkey comprising of Antioch (now Antakya) and Alexandretta (now Iskenderun). The independent state was ceded to Turkey in 1939 and its population in 1961 was 441,209. Now can we get back to whacky 1940s comics, please...

Ron Bennett of Skyrack Book Service, Leeds adds to the Madam Fatal story...

THIS query in your excellent *Q&A* column about the Madam Fatal character who appeared in the early Quality **Crack Comics** and who is described by Mike Benton in his **The Comic Book in America** as being "the first (and perhaps only) transvestite superhero..."

I'm greatly tempted to construct a fictitious background on the lines that Madam Fatal was actually a try-out character for Will Eisner's **Spirit** but I really can't do it to my old friend Rob Hansen who posed the question and who, incidentally, is well known in science fiction circles for his excellent and highly recommended histories of British SF fandom.

Besides which Rob knows me too well to believe anything I'd write.

Still, let's try him with the fact that Madam Fatal's alter ego was Richard Stanton (wow!), who as mentioned in Jim Steranko's **History of Comics Volume Two** (page 99, foot of column four) "donned his schiksa outfit and sallied forth in purse and heels as the grand old dyke of justice, Madam Fatal."

Steranko goes on to say that the creator should remain anonymous, which leads cynical old me to suspect that he didn't know that Madam Fatal was scripted and drawn by the Gordon and Pinajian team. And Jim's mention of the word "schiksa" makes me wonder whether Madam Fatal was a jewish transvestite!

Still, for the record Madam Fatal appeared from May 1940 to February 1942 in the first twenty-two issues of **Crack Comics**, which were published on a monthly basis.

By the time issue #23 appeared, the United States had entered the war, with the resultant speedily-imposed paper restrictions which forced **Crack Comics** to become a bi-monthly title.

But now of course we have another question: I've no recollection of their having been involved on any other comicbook work, so... who on Earth *were* Gordon and Pinajian?

Instant half-answer, Ron. See Pete Phillips answer for information about Pinajian. But getting back to the TV star of the show...

Sergio Perciballi of Peterborough adds his input...

IN **Over 50 years of American Comic Books** by Ron Goulart, the author says on page 122 "**Crack's** most unusual strip, Madam Fatal, dealt with a famous character actor who dressed up like a little old lady to go after crooks."

Interestingly Peter David, when writing **Justice League Task Force** #7, has J'onn J'onzz (a green alien male shapeshifter) changing from a male to a female shape. Other shape-shifters with lesbian overtones can be found in the article *The First Lesbian Superhero?* by Fabio P. Barbieri in **Battleground** #5.

*... all of which neatly ties up this month's Answer and Answer (!) column by linking the suddenly-hot character Madam Fatal with this issue's main point of controversy, **Battleground** (see Comment and Letters for details). Thanks, Sergio.*

COMICS ECONOMICS

The direct sale market now represents over 85% of US comics publishers sales revenue. The following shows the top titles ordered through the four leading UK & US direct sales distributors. As such it does not reflect retail sales, but instead total orders placed by traders anticipating their retail sales three months ahead. *compiled by Phil Hall*

Direct Market trade order charts: November '94 titles

Titan Distributors (UK) Top 50 Titles

1	X-Men 40 ($1.95)	Marvel	26	Cyberforce 9 ($1.95)	Image
2	Spawn 26 ($1.95)	Image	27	X-Men 2099 #16 ($1.50)	Marvel
3	Uncanny X-Men 320 ($1.95)	Marvel	28	Fantastic Four 396 ($1.50)	Marvel
4	Generation X 3 ($1.95)	Marvel	29	Superman 96 ($1.50)	DC
5	Sandman 66 ($1.95)	DC	30	Spider-Man 54 ($2.95)	Marvel
6	Rogue 1 ($2.95)	Marvel	31	ClanDestine 4 ($1.95)	Marvel
7	Batman/Predator II #2 ($2.50)	DC	32	Judge Dredd/Legends 2 ($1.95)	DC
8	Wolverine 89 ($1.95)	Marvel	33	Superman Man of Steel 40 ($1.50)	DC
9	Batman 514 ($1.50)	DC	34	Adventures/Superman 519 ($1.50)	DC
10	X-Force 42 ($1.95)	Marvel	35	Cable 19 ($1.95)	Marvel
11	WildC.A.T.s 15 ($1.95)	Image	36	Lobo 12 ($1.95)	DC
12	Previews vol 4 #11 ($2.00)	Diamond	37	Action Comics 706 ($1.50)	DC
13	Sin City: Big Fat Kill 1 ($2.95)	D.Horse	38	Invisibles 5 ($1.95)	DC
14	Legends/Dark Knight 67 ($1.95)	DC	39	Star Wars/Dark Lords 2 ($2.50)	D.Horse
15	X-Factor 110 ($1.95)	Marvel	40	Spect Spider-Man 220 ($1.50)	Marvel
16	Bishop 2 ($2.95)	Marvel	41	Books of Magic 9 ($1.95)	DC
17	Wetworks 4 ($1.95)	Image	42	Robin 13 ($1.50)	DC
18	Detective Comics 681 ($1.50)	DC	43	Web of Spider-Man 120 ($1.50)	Marvel
19	Hellblazer 85 ($1.95)	DC	44	Catwoman 17 ($1.75)	DC
20	Sin City Babe Wore Red (2.95)	D.Horse	45	Spider-Man 2099 #27 ($1.50)	Marvel
21	Shadow of the Bat 34 ($1.95)	DC	46	Judge Dredd 6 ($1.95)	DC
22	Pitt 7 ($1.95)	Image	47	Silver Surfer 100 ($2.95)	Marvel
23	Incredible Hulk 425 ($1.50)	Marvel	48	Force Works 7 ($1.50)	Marvel
24	Amazing Spider-Man 397 (1.50)	Marvel	49	Shade 55 ($1.95)	DC
25	Excalibur 85 ($1.95)	Marvel	50	Daredevil 336 ($1.50)	Marvel

First Choice Wholesale (UK) Top 50 Titles

1	Spawn 26 ($1.95)	Image	26	Sin City Babe Wore Red ($2.95)	D.Horse
2	X-Men 40 ($1.95)	Marvel	27	Sin City Big Fat Kill 1 ($2.95)	D.Horse
3	Sandman 66 ($1.95)	DC	28	Amazing Spider-Man 397 ($1.95)	Marvel
4	Uncanny X-Men 320 ($1.95)	Marvel	29	Legends/Dark Knight 67 ($1.95)	DC
5	Generation X 3 ($3.95)	Marvel	30	Pitt 7 ($1.95)	Image
6	Rogue 1 ($2.95)	Marvel	31	Shadow of the Bat 34 ($1.95)	DC
7	Wolverine 89 ($1.95)	Marvel	32	Spider-Man 54 ($1.95)	Marvel
8	Batman/Predator II #2 ($2.50)	DC	33	Spect Spider-Man 220 ($1.50)	Marvel
9	Judge Dredd/Legends 2 ($1.95)	DC	34	ClanDestine 4 ($1.95)	Marvel
10	Hellblazer 85 ($1.95)	DC	35	Excalibur 85 ($1.95)	Marvel
11	Wetworks 4 ($1,95)	Image	36	Web of Spider-Man 120 ($1.50)	Marvel
12	Invisibles 5 ($1.95)	DC	37	Silver Surfer 100 ($2.95)	Marvel
13	WildC.A.T.s 15 ($1.95)	Image	38	Classic Star Wars: Jedi 2 (2.50)	D.Horse
14	Judge Dredd 6 ($1.95)	DC	39	Fantastic Four 396 ($1.50)	Marvel
15	X-Force 42 ($1.95)	Marvel	40	Man of Steel 40 ($1.50)	DC
16	Primortals 1 ($1.95)	Tekno	41	Robin 12 ($1.50)	DC
17	Vamps 6 ($1.95)	DC	42	Babylon 5 #1 ($1.95)	DC
18	Star Wars/Dark Lords 2 (2.50)	D.Horse	43	Cable 19 ($1.95)	Marvel
19	Mr Hero 1 ($1.95)	Tekno	44	Cyberforce 9 ($1.95)	Image
20	Bishop 2 ($2.95)	Marvel	45	Spider-Man 2099 #27 ($1.50)	Marvel
21	Batman 514 ($1.50)	DC	46	Superman 96 ($1.50)	DC
22	Detective Comics 681 ($1.50)	DC	47	Team 7 #2 ($1.95)	Image
23	X-Factor 110 ($1.95)	Marvel	48	Vengeance/Vampirella 8 ($2.50)	Harris
24	Books of Magic 9 ($1.95)	DC	49	Classic Star Wars/Early 4 (2.50)	D.Horse
25	Hulk 425 ($2.95)	Marvel	50	Catwoman 17 ($1.50)	DC

Diamond Distributors (US) Top 50 Titles

1	X-Men 40 ($1.95)	Marvel	26	Spider-Man 54 ($1.95)	Marvel
2	Spawn 26 ($1.95)	Image	27	Incredible Hulk 425 ($1.50)	Marvel
3	Uncanny X-Men 320 ($1.95)	Marvel	28	Prophet 8 ($2.50)	Image
4	Generation X #3 ($1.95)	Marvel	29	X-Men 2099 #16 ($1.50)	Marvel
5	Rogue 1 ($2.95)	Marvel	30	Shadow of the Bat 34 ($1.95)	DC
6	Wolverine 89 ($1.95)	Marvel	31	Legends/Dark Knight 67 ($1.95)	DC
7	Wetworks 4 ($1.95)	Image	32	Web of Spider-Man 120 ($1.50)	Marvel
8	WildC.A.T.s 15 ($2.25)	Image	33	Spect Spider-Man 220 ($1.50)	Marvel
9	Mighty Morphin P R 1 (1.95)	Hamilton	34	Cable 19 ($1.95)	Marvel
10	Bishop 2 ($2.95)	Marvel	35	Backlash 2 ($1.95)	Image
11	Pitt 7 ($1.95)	Image	36	Youngblood Year One 1 ($2.50)	Image
12	Batman/Predator II #2 ($2.50)	DC	37	Robin 13 ($1.50)	DC
13	X-Force 42 ($1.95)	Marvel	38	Excalibur 85 ($1.95)	Marvel
14	Batman 514 ($1.50)	DC	39	Star Wars/Dark Lords 2($2.50)	D.Horse
15	Team 7 #2 ($1.95)	Image	40	Stormwatch 17 ($1.95)	Image
16	Superman 96 ($1.50)	DC	41	Silver Surfer 100 ($2.95)	Marvel
17	X-Factor 110 ($1.50)	Marvel	42	Catwoman 17 ($1.50)	DC
18	Adventures/Superman 514 ($1.50)	DC	43	Black & White 2 ($1.95)	Image
19	Cyberforce 9 ($1.95)	Image	44	Green Lantern 58 ($1.50)	DC
20	Superman Man of Steel 40 ($1.50)	DC	45	Tales of Suspense ($6.95)	Marvel
21	Amazing Spider-Man 397 ($1.50)	Marvel	46	Battlestone 1 ($2.50)	Image
22	Detective Comics 681 ($1.50)	DC	47	Superboy 11 ($1.50)	DC
23	Action Comics 706 ($1.50)	DC	48	Sandman 66 ($1.95)	DC
24	Mr Hero 1 ($1.95)	Tekno	49	Fantastic Four 396 ($1.50)	Marvel
25	Primortals 1 ($1.95)	Tekno	50	Sin City Big Fat Kill 1 ($2.95)	D.Horse

Capital City Distribution (US) Top 50 Titles

1	X-Men 40 ($1.95)	Marvel	26	Primortals 1 ($1.95)	Tekno
2	Spawn 26 ($1.95)	Image	27	X-Men 2099 #16 ($1.50)	Marvel
3	Uncanny X-Men 320 ($1.95)	Marvel	28	Mr Hero 1 ($1.95)	Tekno
4	Generation X 3 ($1.95)	Marvel	29	Cable 19 ($1.95)	Marvel
5	Rogue 1 ($2.95)	Marvel	30	Prophet 8 ($2.50)	Image
6	Wolverine 89 ($1.95)	Marvel	31	Legends/Dark Knight 67 ($1.95)	DC
7	Wetworks 4 ($1.95)	Image	32	Spect Spider-Man 220 ($1.50)	Marvel
8	WildC.A.T.s 15 ($1.95)	Image	33	Silver Surfer 100 ($2.95)	Marvel
9	Bishop 2 ($2.95)	Marvel	34	Web of Spider-Man 120 ($1.50)	Marvel
10	Pitt 7 ($1.95)	Image	35	Shadow of the Bat 34 ($1.95)	DC
11	X-Force 42 ($1.95)	Marvel	36	Excalibur 85 ($3.50)	Marvel
12	Batman/Predator II #2 ($2.50)	DC	37	Robin 13 ($1.50)	DC
13	X-Factor 110 ($1.95)	Marvel	38	Star Wars/Dark Lords 2 ($2.50)	D.Horse
14	Batman 514 ($1.50)	DC	39	Backlash 2 ($2.50)	Image
15	Mighty Morphin P R 1 ($2.50)	Hamilton	40	Catwoman 17 ($1.50)	DC
16	Team 7 #2 ($1.95)	Image	41	Stormwatch 17 ($1.95)	Image
17	Superman 96 ($1.50)	DC	42	Black & White 2 ($1.95)	Image
18	Adventures/Superman 519 ($1.50)	DC	43	Green Lantern 58 ($1.50)	DC
19	Amazing Spider-Man 397 ($1.50)	Marvel	44	Sandman 66 ($1.95)	DC
20	Superman Man of Steel 40 ($1.50)	DC	45	Superboy 11 ($1.50)	DC
21	Detective Comics 681 ($1.50)	DC	46	Fantastic Four 396 ($1.50)	Marvel
22	Action Comics 706 ($1.50)	DC	47	Beavis & Butt-Head 11 ($1.95)	Marvel
23	Cyberforce 9 ($1.95)	Image	48	Shi 5 ($2.95)	Crusade
24	Hulk 425 ($1.50)	Marvel	49	Battlestone 1 ($2.50)	Image
25	Spider-Man 54 ($1.95)	Marvel	50	Extreme Justice 0 ($1.50)	DC

Comics International Top 50: November 1994

WHILE the facing page's charts for the two major US distributors and their UK equivalents throw up interesting differences between buying trends in each country, to overview the total ordering, **Comics International** produces its own top fifty chart. The only combined chart in the industry.

Taking the order levels from each company and factoring in the size of each operation, we are able to produce a chart reflecting the entire month with far greater accuracy than those produced for the record, film or book industry.

As always, this represents the trade orders for titles — meaning retailers believe they can sell the books they are ordering. Whether consumers choose to buy them is a different matter. (Key: re = re-entry)

1	(3)	X-Men 40 ($1.95/$1.50)	Marvel
2	(1)	Spawn 26 ($1.95)	Image
3	(4)	Uncanny X-Men 320 ($1.95/$1.50)	Marvel
4	(5)	Generation X #3 ($3.95)	Marvel
5	(new)	Rogue 1 ($2.95)	Marvel
6	(=)	Wolverine 89 ($1.95/$1.50)	Marvel
7	(re)	Wetworks 4 ($2.50)	Image
8	(6)	Bishop 2 ($2.95)	Marvel
9	(re)	WildC.A.T.s 15 ($1.95)	Image
10	(re)	Pitt 7 ($1.95)	Image
11	(10)	X-Force 42 ($1.50/$1.95)	Marvel
12	(9)	Batman/Predator II: Bloodmatch #2 ($2.50)	DC
13	(new)	Mighty Morphin Power Rangers 1 ($1.95)	Hamilton
14	(12)	Batman 514 ($1.50)	DC
15	(13)	X-Factor 110 ($1.50/$1.95)	Marvel
16	(11)	Superman 96 ($1.50)	DC
17	(8)	Team 7 #2 ($2.25)	Image
18	(14)	Adventures of Superman 519 ($1.50)	DC
19	(15)	Superman Man of Steel 40 ($1.50)	DC
20	(=)	Amazing Spider-Man 397 ($2.95)	Marvel
21	(=)	Detective Comics 681 ($1.50)	DC
22	(16)	Action Comics 706 ($1.50)	DC
23	(42)	Incredible Hulk 425 ($1.50)	Marvel
24	(re)	Cyberforce 9 ($1.95)	Image
25	(new)	Mr Hero, The Newmatic Man 1 ($1.95)	Tekno
26	(new)	Leonard Nimoy's The Primortals 1 ($1.95)	Tekno
27	(=)	Spider-Man 54 ($1.95)	Marvel
28	(22)	X-Men 2099 #16 ($1.50)	Marvel
29	(re)	Prophet 8 ($2.50)	Image
30	(33)	Spectacular Spider-Man 220 ($2.95)	Marvel
31	(37)	Web of Spider-Man 120 ($2.95)	Marvel
32	(25)	Legends of the Dark Knight 67 ($1.95)	DC
33	(26)	Batman: Shadow of the Bat 34 ($1.95)	DC
34	(new)	Silver Surfer 100 ($2.95)	Marvel
35	(29)	Cable 19 ($3.50)	Marvel
36	(=)	Excalibur 85 ($1.95)	Marvel
37	(30)	Robin 13 ($1.50)	DC
38	(24)	Dark Lords of the Sith 2 ($2.50)	Dark Horse
39	(18)	Backlash 2 ($2.25)	Image
40	(32)	Stormwatch 17 ($1.95)	Image
41	(47)	Sandman 66 ($1.95)	DC
42	(38)	Catwoman 17 ($1.50)	DC
43	(19)	Black and White 2 ($1.95)	Image
44	(=)	Superboy 11 ($1.50)	DC
45	(=)	Green Lantern 58 ($1.50)	DC
46	(new)	Shi: The Way of the Warrior 5 ($2.95)	Crusade
47	(new)	Tales of Suspense ($6.95)	Marvel
48	(28)	Fantastic Four 396 ($1.50)	Marvel
49	(new)	Youngblood Year One #1 ($2.50)	Image
50	(new)	Sin City: Big Fat Kill 1 ($2.95)	Dark Horse

Marvel Comics domination of the charts with 38% represents a small drop on the previous month. But the X-Men family increases yet again with the release of the **Rogue** mini-series which positioned fifth.

Bishop #2, placing eighth, gave Marvel's mutants a 60% share of the top ten and 22% of the overall chart, representing more than half of Marvel's charting comics. The core titles all rose while the secondary titles only fell by comparatively small amounts.

However, **X-Men 2099** #16 (officially part of the 2099 stable) dropped dramatically on previous months, falling to 28 in the chart. This title's longevity as a top 50 book may be drawing to a close.

Silver Surfer #100 is a new entry for the former Galactus herald, the Surfer's highest position in a distributors chart for fifty issues.

The Hulk breaks into the top 25 for the first time in the chart's history with the landmark #425. But the position may weaken slightly over the next three to six months with the departure of artist Gary Frank.

The other notable new entry for Marvel was **Tales of Suspense**, which, although not as high as **Tales to Astonish**, only confirms the popularity of the **Marvels**-style bookshelf titles.

The Spider-Man family of titles continue to be strong. All either gained ground on top spots or held their positions.

Image Comics 22% showing in the chart is another 6% fall on the previous months. Only two Extreme Studios titles made the top 50 and the company's sole "new" entry, Rob Liefeld's **Youngblood: Year One**, barely managed to chart, appearing at #49.

Despite non-monthly titles **WildC.A.T.s**, **Wetworks** and **Pitt** all being high entries for Image this month, and **Cyberforce** and **Prophet** both managed to re-enter in the top 30, the company still lost ground compared with previous months totals.

Five Image titles dropped in position. **Stormwatch**, **Black & White**, **Backlash**, **Team 7** and, despite the return of Todd McFarlane, **Spawn** — which has been dislodged from the top spot it achieved last month when Greg Capullo and Tom Orzechowski ghosted for McFarlane.

DC Comics has a 28% share of the top 50 this month, no change on last month, but fails to maintain its average of one title in the top ten.

Batman/Predator II: Bloodmatch #2 places the highest for DC at twelfth, while the other Batbooks all take tumbles, with only **Batman** #512 and **Detective Comics** #681 holding any ground on the previous month.

The Superman family continues to slide as, for the first time in this chart's history, a Superman title drops out of the top 20. **Action Comics** places at 22, three positions adrift of **Superman: Man of Steel** at 19. Although it is unlikely that the titles will drop out of the top 50, it may be that the days of continuous high sales are over for Superman.

Sandman creeps up the chart to its highest ever position of #41, to become DC's most popular title after the Batman and Superman families.

Green Lantern held onto #45, as **Superboy** did at #44, gritty performances from stragglers in a chart with more action than usual.

Tekno Comix has leaped into the top 50 with its first two releases, **Leonard Nimoy's The Primortals** and **Neil Gaiman's Mr Hero — The Newmatic Man** (quite possibly two of the longest titles of comics since the latest **Star Wars** series from Dark Horse!).

Dark Horse: **Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi — the Dark Lords of the Sith** #2 and **Sin City: The Big Fat Kill** #1 both charted in the 50 giving Dark Horse its best chart performance to date at 4%. The growing popularity of Frank Miller's **Sin City** also saw the reprint collection **The Bride Wore Red** placing at 60 in the chart. Overall, Dark Horse is staking its claim in the top 100.

Event Comics: Joe Quesada's first self-published title **Ash** failed to make it into the 50, placing only at 54. In the wake of Bart Sears' Ominous Press ceasing, Event may find the going tough with such a poor first show in comparison to Tekno Comix.

Harris charted in the top 100 with **Vengeance of Vampirella** #7, which reached a high of #58, as well as the Vampirella crossover title **Chains of Chaos: Link One** which charted at #80.

Bongo is still placing, despite a small product line. Its only November release, **Itchy & Scratchy Holiday Hi-Jinks** #1, charted at 99.

Hamilton: After placing with **Mighty Morphin Power Rangers** #1 five months ago through Diamond, Hamilton resolicited the title through all distributors for November, and it charts at #13. When the scheduling is determined, expect this title to stay in the top 50 for at least its first three issues.

Valiant for the first time since the chart's inception, has failed to place any of its titles in the top 100 sellers.

Crusade: **Shi: The Way of the Warrior** has been steadily climbing the charts since its launch and has now broken into the top 50 for the first time. Like **Bone** and **Cerebus**, **Shi** is a self-published title, proving that alternative publishers can break through.

(analysis continues on following page)

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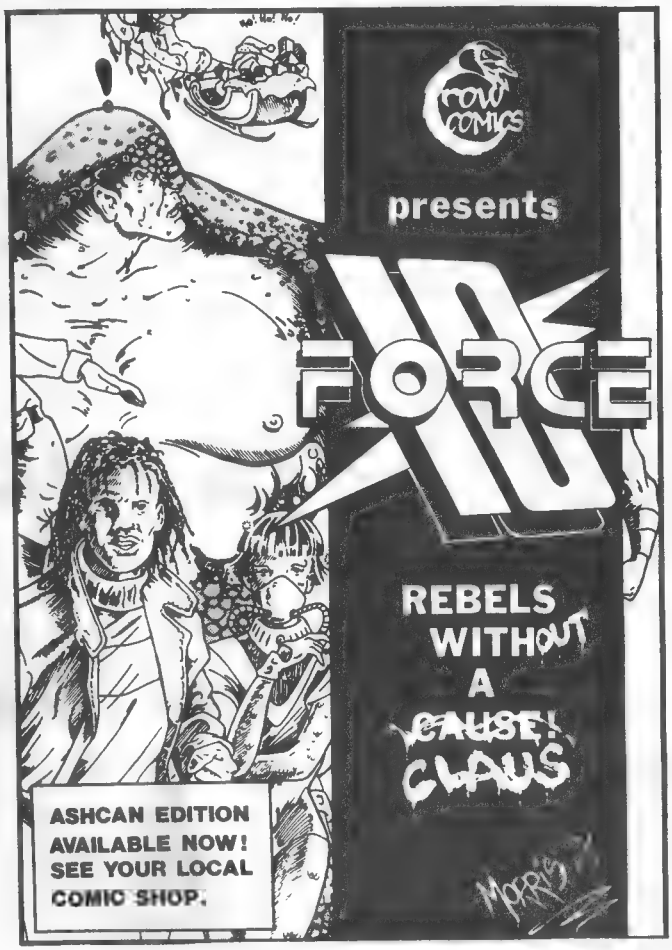

General analysis

The following key titles failed to chart:
From Marvel: **Daredevil** #336, **Fantastic Force** #3, **Spider-Man Adventures** #2, **Hulk 2099** #2, **Spider-Man: Friends & Enemies** #1, **Spider-Man: Power of Terror** #1 and **X-Men Spectacular** #1.
DC: **DC Showcase '95** #1, **Star Trek Next Generation/Star Trek Deep Space Nine** #2, **Babylon 5** #1 and **Extreme Justice** #0.
20 Image titles failed to place in this month's top 50: **Shadowhawk** #15, **Supreme** #21, **Bloodstrike** #16, **Newmen** #8, **Youngblood Strikefile** #9, **Brigade** #14, **Codename: Strykeforce** #9, **Savage Dragon** #15, **Supreme: Glory Days** #2, **Deadly Duo** #1, **Shaman's Tears** #3, **Doom's IV Sourcebook** #1, **Team Youngblood** #15, **WildC.A.T.s Adventures** #3, **Deathblow** #11, **Battlestone** #1, **Boof** #5, **Boof and the Bruise Crew** #5 and **Freak Force** #10, which collected Image's wooden spoon for the fifth month.

Overview: Ups, Downs and Outs

Titles that dropped out of the chart this month (not including one-shots and concluded mini-series):

	issue #	last month	this month
Deathblow	11	(50)	54
Savage Dragon	15	(38)	51
Venom: Separation	2	(41)	57
The Hulk 2099	2	(31)	74
WildC.A.T.s Adventures	3	(48)	58
Badrock & Company	3	(35)	65
Evil Ernie: Revenge	2	(46)	64

Okay, comic-watchers, here's the summary...

Titles rising: 7
Titles falling: 22
New entries: 9
Re-entries: 5
Non-movers: 7

Highest new entry ..... **Rogue** #1 (Marvel)
Highest climber ... **The Incredible Hulk** #425 (Marvel) up 19 places
Biggest drop ..... **Black and White** #2 (Image) down 24 places
Highest re-entry ..... **Wetworks** #4 (Image)

Twelve month breakdown:

% = number of titles in top 50

Comics International	#38	#39	#40	#41	#42	#43	#44	#45	#46	#47	#48	#49
Marvel	38	44	40	48	48	38	38	34	42	40	40	38
DC	26	26	28	30	32	32	32	38	28	26	28	28
Image	22	18	24	18	18	28	28	24	28	34	28	22
Dark Horse	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	4
Valiant	8	4	4	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Malibu	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bongo	4	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamilton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0	0	0	2
Chaos	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0
Tekno	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Crusade	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Publishers' % family of titles shares:

	#38	#39	#40	#41	#42	#43	#44	#45	#46	#47	#48	#49
X-family	18	22	16	20	24	20	20	20	22	20	22	22
Superman	14	14	14	16	16	16	14	22	12	10	10	10
Bat family	10	10	12	14	12	12	14	12	14	12	14	14
Spider-Man	10	10	12	12	14	10	8	8	8	12	10	8
Extreme	10	6	8	10	4	6	10	4	6	10	6	4
Homage	12	10	8	10	8	10	12	12	12	14	14	12

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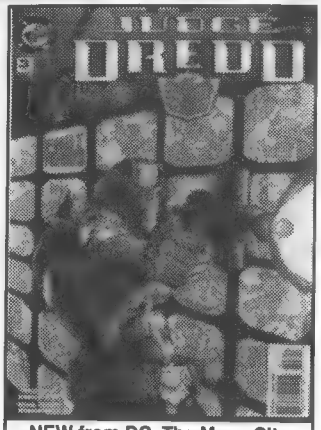

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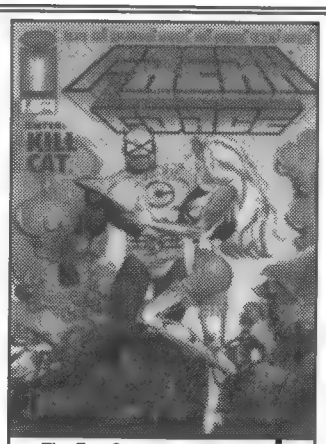

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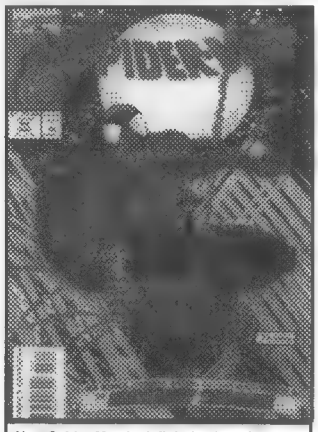

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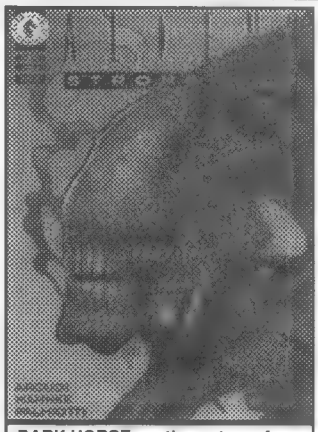

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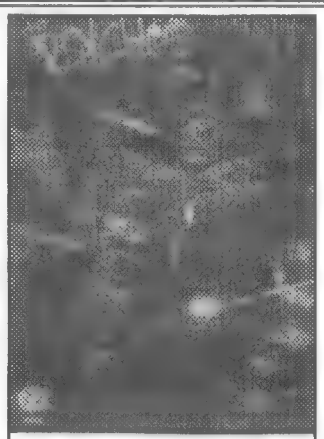

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***Review codes:** General competitive performance of a title is measured on a scale of 1 to 10. A specific issue's quality, as measured against previous issues: <- - -> to <+ + +>.*

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***Reviews Editor:** Sarah Bolesworth*

Reviewing panel: Simon Bowland (SB), Fabio P. Barbieri (FPB), Michael Graney (MG), Phil Hall (PH), Rol Hirst (RH), Richard J Johnston (RJJ), Mike Kidson (MK), Peter C. Phillips (PCP), Michael Sperlinger (MS), Alan Woolcombe (AW)

DC COMICS

Action Comics 704 <-> (Michelinie & Guice + Rodier) I never thought I'd grow tired of Jackson Guice pencils but this issue looks like little more than layouts. But beyond these lacklustre visuals, there's a semblance of an interesting story as Superman tracks down one of his imposters, attempting to discover why there's *another* body in his tomb! (SB) 5

Adventures of Superman 517 <+-> (Kesel & Kitson + McCarthy) So just who is Superman? The long-haired guy or the dead body that's appeared in his tomb? The mystery continues to unravel as Lois and even Clark himself begin to get niggling doubts about who's dead and who isn't. Kesel continues to deliver the goods while Kitson once more illustrates why he's been offered two monthly Bat-titles. (SB) 9

Aquaman 3 <-> (David & Egeland + various) It's always worrying when a book's artist needs time off by issue #3, and the half-absence of Egeland this time does let things down slightly. As for our hero's hook — am I the only person to see problems with this particular accoutrement? Careful when you go to the loo, Arthur! (RH) 7

<-> Aquaman's new left hand — a large steel spike — makes its proper debut this issue and what better way to try it out than in a tussle with Superboy! Peter David still keeps this title refreshing and the visuals aren't too shabby either! (SB) 7

Animal Man 77 <-> (Delano & Snejbjerg) The various character plotlines merge as Animal Man's church make its way to the promised land. Delano manages to keep the characters unpredictably believable, but Snejbjerg's guest art doesn't convey the same warts-and-all quality as regular artist Steve Pugh's. (RH) 7

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 65 <+ -> (DeMatteis & Staton) What could have been a dream storyline for me (DeMatteis doing the Joker) is seriously let down by very inappropriate art from Joe Staton. The script shows promise, but really, almost any other artist would have been preferable. (RH) 7

<+> Start of a four-part story arc exploring the Joker's reactions when he believes he has killed the Batman. Should be a fun ride, though Staton's cartoony style can be a turn-off to many Bat-fans. (PCP) 6

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 66 <+> (DeMatteis & Staton) The Joker, having forgotten his life of criminal insanity, now lives relatively normally. But flashes of his true persona threaten to overtake him. Another excellent script from DeMatteis, which successfully portrays the torment of a man trying to hold back the tidal wave of madness that we all know will ultimately engulf him. Staton's artwork has improved, but is still a bit too sketchy for my taste. (MG) 8

Batman 512 <-> (Moench & Gustovich) Dick Grayson's first assignment under the cowl is against Killer Croc in a tale that harks back to the early '80s Batman in both story and art. It's a lightweight affair, but Grayson makes a much more readable surrogate than Azrael. (RH) 6

<+> Killer Croc returns causing Dick Grayson to doubt he has the necessary skills to become the new Batman. Character-driven plots hum along smoothly. (PCP) 7

Batman Adventures 25 <+> (Puckett & Parobeck) Double-sized issue in which Superman and Batman join forces to thwart the latest schemes of Maxie Zeus and Lex Luthor. But the routine plot is a let-down. (PCP) 5

Batman Adventures 26 <+> (Puckett & Parobeck) Robin and Batgirl investigate the theft of antique pistols. Excellent chemistry between the principle characters. (PCP) 8

<+ -> In today's world of violent comics with sketchy art, this book is so refreshing. Puckett's scripting is way above average, but it is the clear, bold figurework of Parobeck that really shines. (SB) 9

Batman Adventures Annual 1 (Dini & various) Book-length narrative explores the inability of several Bat-foes to reform despite opportunities to do so. John Byrne and Matt Wagner — among other luminaries — contribute to a gem of a yarn. (PCP) 9

Batman: Shadow of the Bat 32 <+ -> (Grant & Blevins) Scarface and a "reluctant" Ventriloquist return, aiming to seize control of Gotham's underworld. Well-told tale, though Blevins fails to capture any body language to differentiate Grayson from his mentor in the role of the Bat. (PCP) 4

<+> The Ventiloquist and Scarface are back — is it me, or are these two villains far too over-used? It's like Grant is trying his hardest to force them into the category of "classic" Bat villains, but as every time they appear the story's the same, I'm not sure it works. (RH) 5

Batman: The Last Angel (gn; Lustbader & Moder + Hanna) The Batman/Catwoman *Elseworlds* is 96 pages of heaven. Lustbader has a superb handle on the characters and this is backed up by Moder and Hanna's clear, crisp artwork. Forget Knightfall, this is the Bat-event of 1994! (SB) 10

Catwoman attempts to save Gotham from an evil Maya Death God controlling the actions of the Batman. Fairly routine, given Lustbader's pedigree and that Selina's background doesn't quite gel with recent disclosures in her own title. Palatable enough, with Hanna tidying up some of Moder's rough spots in the visuals. (PCP) 6

Batman: Ten Nights of the Beast (tpbk; Starlin & Aparo) An old-style four-parter from 1987, this is Batman as if Frank Miller had never happened to him. Dull in every department and the kind of thing that gives trade paperbacks a bad name. (AW) 3

Batman vs. Predator II #1 (Moench & Gulacy + Austin) Predator returns to Gotham for a rematch with Bats, and the Huntress gets involved, too. That's about it, really. Nice art, shame about the lack of plot. (RH) 5

Books of Magic 7 <+ -> (Reiber & Gross) Tim's father is on the critical list and Martyn now has his eyes on the young mage himself. The art struggles to find a style of its own but remains clean and attractive; Reiber, however, despite a good ear for dialogue and a strong hold on his plot, has begun to slip into glib Gaimanisms which do Tim no favours. (MS) 7

Catwoman 15 <+> (Dixon & Balent + Smith) Okay, my hormones tell me I love this book. But look beyond the sexy linework of Jim Balent and you've got a cracking entertaining read, every month without fail. Catwoman heads off in a new direction this issue, abducted by and forced into working for the government. (SB) 8

<+> Change of direction issue that has Catwoman becoming an unwilling agent for a covert government organisation. Stereotypes abound in what is hopefully only a short-lived story arc. (PCP) 5

Detective Comics 679 <+ +> (Dixon & Weeks) The atmospheric pencils of Lee Weeks grace this issue but show no disrespect for regular artist Graham Nolan. The results are stunning, Batman has never looked more dark and moody and Two-Face unnerved me slightly, he's looking that hideous! (SB) 9

<+> One of the big mysteries in comics is why Lee Weeks isn't offered more work. Here he once again proves himself to be a master storyteller in his portrayal of Batman, and livens up an otherwise dull issue. (RH) 8

<+> Dick Grayson stalks an escaped felon — The Ratcatcher — through Gotham's sewers. Usual taut scripting from Dixon, although it's Lee Weeks who takes the honours in the art department. A shame he's only doing this and the next issue. (PCP) 9

Flash 95 <-> (Waid & LaRocca) Wally and Impulse struggle to track down Kobra before Wally's accelerated powers get the better of him. The new art team puts in a valiant effort, but it doesn't quite live up to what we've come to expect in this book. (RH) 8

Flash 96 <-> (Waid & LaRocca + Marzan) Wally struggles to come to terms with what's happening to his body while also trying to train Impulse to full fitness. The artists try hard, but this book is still recovering from the loss of Mike Wierengo. (RH) 7

<+> Wally West isn't quite human anymore. The faster he runs, the less human he becomes, instead turning into pure energy. That's the bad news. The really bad news is that he's not told his girlfriend yet. Writer Waid's grasp of narrative is stunning, as is Salvador LaRocca's pencilling (SB) 9

Hawkman 15 <+ -> (Loebs & Lieber) Hawkman is drawn into a battle with Aquaman in a beautifully illustrated story (Steve Lieber has real potential) but it's annoying that Loebs continues to avoid explaining just what *did* happen to Hawkman as a result of **Zero Hour**. (RH) 8

Hellblazer 83 <+> (Ennis & Dillon) The devil gets his comeuppance but Constantine's victory is tinged with guilt, old and new. Ennis and Dillon bow out in style, leaving us just a little misty-eyed at closing time. Pretty near definitive. (MS) 10

<+ -> The masters take their leave with a conclusion of such staggering proportions that we are actually treated to a rewritten history of Heaven and Hell, a shocking twist that was impossible to see coming and even links to the very first Ennis story three years ago, bringing the book full circle. A classic. (RH) 10

Hellblazer 84 (Delano & Phillips) Delano returns for one issue and it's like he's never been away — this story of Constantine's early relationship with Chas could easily have fit into his first run on the title. But while I do miss Ennis & Dillon, the real loss to this title is the departure of cover artist Glenn Fabry. He'll be missed. (RH) 8

<+ -> A blast from Constantine's past from old hand Delano and new boy Phillips. Delano pulls all the right strings, but it's Phillips who'll have John's fans dancing on the ceiling — forget those scratchy **Kid Eternity** days, this has more in common with Fleetway's glorious **Devlin Waugh**. Auspicious. (MS) 8

<-> A tale of a disgusting old woman and her equally revolting pet chimp. Delano's one-off return to this title reminded me of the mixed feelings I have about his work. His **Hellblazer** stories seem to linger on the seedier, grosser aspects of horror. I'm not saying that isn't effective, but I came away from this issue feeling I'd had the mental equivalent of pants-sniffing on washday! (MG) 7

Invisibles 3 (Morrison & Yeowell) It's time for Dane to face some harsh truths, courtesy of his enigmatic new mentor. From the glorious Phillips

cover onwards, it's a crash course in the world according to Morrison, as he kicks away yet another tenet of modern civilisation. Without doubt, the comic most likely to start the revolution — read it before they ban it. (MS) **9**

Mobfire 1 (Ushaw & Pleece) It's *The Godfather* meets *The Omen* as this gangster/occult mini-series kicks off, but unfortunately a great idea loses out to tentative handling by its creators. Both plotting and script are slightly lumpy, but it's the art that jars — whatever Pleece's virtues, he is entirely at sea in what is an offbeat genre blend. (MS) **4**

A young man becomes the head of a London crime family built on magic and prepares himself for the conflicts to come. This mini-series starts well enough and generates genuine interest in the nastiness that you know will follow. Pleece's water-colours work well with the material. (MG) **7**

Outsiders 12 <+> (Barr & Pelletier) The team has split into two factions, one following the Eradicator and the other still on the right side of the law. However, Joe Public is tarring the two with the same brush, making everyone's life difficult. Pelletier's pencils are a rare treat, mixing Alan Davis and Dale Keown styles with his own dynamic sense of layout. (SB) **8**

Robin 11 <+ -> (Dixon & Jimenez) A delicious fill-in from Phil Jiminez as Robin and Dick track down Two-Face, leading up to a potentially lethal showdown. Good stuff. (RH) **8**

<+> Two-Face turns up the heat in his scheme to entice Robin into his clutches. Dixon draws on the worst excesses of Harvey Dent's dual persona in a taut crime thriller. Jiminez deputises on pencils, to stunning effect. (PCP) **9**

Sandman 64 <+ -> (Gaiman & Kristiansen) New artist Teddy Kristiansen fits easily into the gap left by Marc Hempel as the much delayed showdown with the Furies begins at last. Plotlines are simmering nicely now, but let's hope Gaiman doesn't drag this final story line out *too* long. (RH) **8**

Shade 54 <+> (Milligan & Buckingham + Bryant) Shade seeks to distance himself from real life and turns himself into a dance floor, but a chance encounter with a young deaf girl brings him back. A touching story, with Mark Buckingham shining as the new and regular artist. (RH) **8**

<-> An abrupt change of pace for our fashionable friend Shade, in the form of a sojourn as a dance floor. Seriously. Not breaking any new ground, for this title, but it proves a thought-provoking diversion nonetheless. (MS) **6**

<+> Shade takes time out as a dance floor and comes into contact with a deaf girl who fascinates him. A well-written story that is intriguing and actually quite touching. It's good to see that Buckingham has decided to follow in the tradition of Bachalo's artwork, rather than imitate it. (MG) **8**

Shadows Fall 1 (Rieber & Van Fleet) A disembodied soul roams a small town, driving its inhabitants to suicide. A dense, theatrical and unremittingly dark script, but rendered with Muth-like brilliance by Van Fleet. (MS) **7**

Showcase 11 (various) Man-Bat stars in a South American jungle epic that throws in every cliche from the genre. A five-minute read and a poor showing throughout. (PCP) **3**

Spectre 23 <+ -> (Ostrander & Mandrake) Jim Corrigan finds himself dragged to the bedside of his first lover, now an old woman on the verge of death, but unable to die because of her involvement with the Spectre. A real character story, but perhaps the OJ Simpson parody that opens the book could have been a little more subtle. (RH) **8**

Spectre 24 <-> (Ostrander & Durkiewicz + Kent + McDaniel) What lets this issue down is the very heavy-handed take on the Kurt Cobain story that starts this issue. Once that's out of the way, the story of Jim Corrigan's old partner works well. But as with the OJ Simpson parody last month, Ostrander's attempts at topicality always seem a little forced. (RH) **7**

Starman 1 <+ -> (Robinson & Harris) The new Starman is certainly not a traditional hero, and by the end of this second issue he remains awkward and unsure. Robinson meanwhile provides an intelligent and at times amusing script, as well as a terrifying version of an old Flash villain. (RH) **8**

Starman 2 <+> (Robinson & Harris + Grawbadger) One of the most stylish and intelligent superhero books in a long time continues to impress as Jack Knight finds himself forced into confrontations with the Mist and the Gentleman Ghost. Tony Harris's art is lovely. (RH) **9**

Star Trek: The Next Generation /Star Trek: Deep Space Nine 1 & 2 (Friedman + Barr & Purcell + Pallot) The crossover between the two shows is unfortunately a disappointment. But this is not entirely the fault of the creative team because there are so many characters involved that to include them all in events that propel the plot is contrived. The dialogue also suffers from being stilted and unnatural. Purcell's art is good but occasionally the photo-reference sources show. (MG) **5**

Superboy 10 <+ -> (Kesel & Ramos + Parks + Woch) Superboy battles various movie monsters in an issue that smells of filler material. Humberto Ramos may be considered hot in some quarters, but he's not a patch on regular artist Tom Grummett. (RH) **7**

Superman 95 <+ -> (Jurgens + Manley) Supes heads off to New Genesis in his quest for the truth about the dead Superman in his tomb. Thinking Braniac is responsible, Superman needs clear evidence that the villain is still catatonic. Is he? I'm not telling, but the Atom gets in on the act too, albeit a little confused at suddenly becoming a teenager again. (SB) **8**

Superman: Time and Time Again (tpbk; DC/Titan various) Hot on the heels of **Zero Hour** comes this repackaging of Superman's ten issue time travel jaunt from 1991. Smart move, and not a bad set of yarns, if slightly disconnected. A good X-Mas

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present for most people. (AW) **6**

Swamp Thing 148 (Millar & Hester) The feeling that I'm reading a watered-down version of Grant Morrison's **Doom Patrol** isn't diminished here by the art. However, it is still enjoyable and contains more good ideas than a lot of comics these days, even if some of the superheroey plot elements seem a little out of place at Vertigo now. (RH) **8**

<- +> Swamp Thing continues as an unwitting pawn in games he — and we — are only beginning to understand. Millar keeps dishing out unparalleled nastiness with dollops of humour — his only failing being a tendency to use a chainsaw where a scalpel would do. (MS) **8**

Wonder Woman 91 (Loebs & Deodato Jr) The contest to decide the new Wonder Woman continues. There was a time when it was original and exciting to have replacement heroes, but it's really become predictable: you know that Diana will be back in 12 months or so. (RH) **7**

Wonder Woman 92 <+ -> (Loebs & Deodato Jr) Amazon princess saves rivals from being turned to stone then loses the race for WonderWomanhood by tripping up... Ripped robe/swimsuit spectacular come to cheesecake life: is this the only way DC can sell this potentially great character? Hot babe factor **9**, everything else **3**. (AW)

Zero Hour (tpbk; DC/Titan; Jurgens w/Ordway) The inevitable book of the series has two flaws; one, it's not much of a story and, two, it's incomplete — all the related bits in other titles are left out. Other than that, DC's second house-cleaning in seven years is your average all-star jam with one of the biggest stars being the baddie. (AW) **6**

MARVEL COMICS

Amazing Spider-Man 395 <-> (DeMatteis & Bagley) More dark 'n' gritty adventures with the super-depressed superhero. Remember when this guy used to tell jokes? Only DeMatteis's script keeps this readable, although the enforced crossover with **Spectacular** (scripted by DeFalco) means that even that won't last. (RH) **4**

Amazing Spider-Man 396 <-> (DeMatteis & Bagley) Spidey meets the new Daredevil to find out whether Matt Murdock is really dead. This is well written, as we've come to expect from DeMatteis, but the feeling of impending doom for the Spider-verse cannot be ignored. That's very depressing. (RH) **6**

Avengers 380 <+ +> (Harras & Deodato + Palmer) The Quicksilver-Crystal relationship is spotlighted once more as one of their friends lies dying in eastern Europe. Quicksilver struggles to come to terms with the situation, and his wife must comfort him, thus bringing their strained relationship together at last. Harras is on form again, whilst Deodato turns in a superb job. (SB) **10**

Essential reading for X-fans, as one of the most interesting mutant characters, Quicksilver, has his past explored and his connections with the High Evolutionary explained. Deodato loses his Image-feel, thanks to a superlative inking job by Tom Palmer. The subplots by Harras prove that you can make even the most lame characters work for you. (PH) **9**

Bishop 1 (Ostrander & Pecheco + Smith) The death of Bishop's two closest compatriots continues to haunt him, and although he tries to put the past (future actually) behind him with a night on the town, you would have thought he'd know by now that life as an X-Man just isn't that easy. Very impressive visuals from Pacheco. (SB) **9**

Captain America 434 <- -> (Gruenwald & Hoover) What started out as an intriguing twelve-part storyline has descended into farce. Goodness-only-knows how many Cap-wannabes there are in this story, but it's obvious that, by the end, Steve Rogers will either be a) retired, only to return or b) cured of his muscle-crippling disease and off on some adventure again. (SB) **2**

Clandestine 2 <+> (Davis w/Farmer) Whereas issue one was good, this is great! Davis pulls out all the stops in terms of script and art, as the Destine clan provide everything a good comic needs: you've got slugfests, gaudy costumes, quirky one-liners, everything. The lettering and colouring has improved noticeably, too. (SB) **9**

<- +> Another enjoyable issue of dumb superheroes in colourful costumes and mercifully angst-free. The sort of comic you thought they didn't make anymore at Marvel. Good old Alan Davis! (RH) **8**

<+ +> As more Clan members are attacked (but Kay is not dead after all), Walter, Dominic and Newton begin to investigate their shadowy foes. Superlatively paced and plotted, drawn as one expects from the master, full of interesting incidents. I want to know what happens next! (FPB) **10**

Alan Davis's answer to the Addams Family starts to come together with his usual sterling brew of adventure and SF, leavened with more than a soupçon of comedy. Now, if only Marvel know enough not to mess with it... (AW) **8**

ClanDestine 3 <+ -> (Davis w/Farmer) Once more Davis provides the goods, with a superbly scripted yarn and some of his strongest visuals to date. I'm pleased to say that the colouring has also reached the same high standard, making this book one of Marvel's best current titles. (SB) **9**

<+> What can you say that hasn't already been said by everybody else? This, after only three issues, is, without equal, Marvel's most colourful and fun-packed series. Compare this to the dreadful, family-based **Blackwulf** series and you wonder what some Marvel editors spend their days doing. A tale full of twists and turns and subtle subplotting. (PH) **10**

Fantastic Four 394 <+> (DeFalco + Lackey & Ryan + Bulanadi) Despite the cliched dialogue, not a bad issue at all. She-Hulk returns to the fold to help sort out the mess that the team are in. However, they're nearly beaten by a killer totem pole, which can't be good for their image. Artist Ryan continues to impress while

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DeFalco sets yet more sub-plots in motion. (SB) 8

Generation X 2 (Lobdell & Bachalo) This issue has all the hallmarks of an early Claremont **New Mutants**, except that instead of lame characters we have some of the most interesting mutants around. I hope that Lobdell continues to explore the more negative points of being a mutant. Chris Bachalo's art shines, reminiscent of Arthur Adams and Andy Kubert. (PH) 9

<+ -> The high standard of issue one is maintained with Bachalo providing easily the most impressive visuals in an X-book. Writer Scott Lobdell is obviously at home on this title, as the team track down Penance, only to find that they aren't the ones doing the hunting. (SB) 9

Groo 118 <+ -> (Aragones w/Evanier) More hilarious social satire as a slobbish rich boy is given the job of dealing with a city's homeless problem. Unfortunately Groo gets involved. Marvel should kick themselves for losing this book. (RH) 9

Hellstorm 20 (Ellis & Manco) While Leonardo Manco contributes his best art yet, the real tragedy of this book is that the continuing plotlines that Ellis has begun to build here are all going to be cut short next issue when the title finishes. We're left just with thoughts of what might have been. An excellent comic. (RH) 9

Hulk 423 <-> (David & Frank + various) The Hulk dies and has to fight his way back from Marvel-Hell in an issue let down by patchy inking. And still no explanation is given as to who this other Thor is... or did I miss something? (RH) 7

<-> This book seems to have slipped in quality since the end of the *Troyjan War* and Gary Frank's art is a disappointment when Cam Smith isn't inking. (PH) 5

<-> An indifferent conclusion to the Hulk's Asgardian outing sees the big guy escape Hel, but leaves a lot of questions unanswered. Weak plotting and unsubtle Joe Rubinstein inks make this the poorest issue in months. (AW) 6

Hulk 424 <+ -> (David & Robertson) It's the trial of Agamemnon, the founder of the Pantheon, accused of selling them all out to a group of aliens, but it's not that cut and dried. Darick Robertson provides an adequate fill-in job. (SB) 7

<-> It is sad to admit that, despite continually high standard scripts from Peter David, this title seems to be losing its appeal. Poor fill-in art from the usually reliable Darick Robertson does nothing to enhance a story which misses the dynamics of Gary Frank and Cam Smith. Let's hope the new art team prove as popular as Keown and Frank, but I have my doubts. (PH) 4

Silver Surfer 98 <+ -> (Marz & Hall) The Surfer's climb back to glory continues as the rekindled Nova relationship, which provides some excellent banter, is spotlighted before they must stop Champion from killing Drax the Destroyer. However, tears are looming on the horizon because Nova isn't all she's cracked up to be. (SB) 9

Tales to Astonish (David & Estes) Clearly attempting to repeat the success of **Marvels**, the one hitch here is that painter John Estes is not **Marvels** painter Alex Ross. That said, Peter David writes a very credible tale and John Estes does paint a fine prestige format book. It's meant to hark back to the fun days of the original **Tales to Astonish** series and it does that quite adequately. (SB) 7

The Wasp, Hank Pym and the Hulk encounter a madman with Loki's powers in Norway. The first post-**Marvels** comic to be presented in the same format, this invites comparison, but falls short. Basically it' a nice enough story but not really worth the special treatment given here. The painted artwork is initially appealing, but the overly garish colouring grates by the end of the book. (MG) 5

Uncanny X-Men 319 <+> (Lobdell & Epting + Green) Another magnificent character-driven story by Lobdell, with the first hint of the "What If Professor X never founded the X-Men" storyline. Lobdell now has my utmost respect on this title, and Steve Epting, free from the deadline hell of **Avengers**, turns in a solid guest-stint on the pencils. X-cellent! (SB) 9

<- +> **Uncanny** seems to excel in slow paced stories and this Lobdell and Epting character study is one of the best the book has ever seen. This title is rapidly becoming *the* essential reading for even the most disillusioned X-fans. (PH) 8

Wolverine 88 <-> (Hama & Kubert + Laguna + Farmer) Wolverine's mutant healing factor kicks in for the first time since #75 as he takes on Deadpool. Larry Hama continues to impress on this title. But regardless of the respect I have for penciller Adam Kubert, he seems incapable of pencilling a full issue for more than two months in a row, subjecting us to a sub-standard second half from yet another Jim Lee clone. 8

<+ -> Despite some very corny dialogue from Hama and a section of the comic being drawn by a fill-in artist, this has something that has been sorely missing from these pages for a long time: a light-hearted jaunt. Logan gets his healing factor back, and takes it upon himself to protect the new Weapon X from Deadpool's jealous revenge. Garrison Kane has never been depicted as such a wuss as he is here! (PH) 7

X-Factor 109 <+> (J. F. Moore + DeZago & Duursema + Milgrom) Jan Duursema bows out with her best artwork to date (funny how that's often the way) in a story that sets the scene for next year's big X-event. A better issue than of late but one gets the impression Marvel is having problems trying to find a direction for this team. (PH) 6

X-Men 38 <-> (Nicieza & Kubert + Ryan) You can't turn a sow's ear into a silk purse by upgrading the paper quality. What this title sorely needs is a writer with vision. Nicieza is merely emulating Scott Lobdell badly, while Andy Kubert's art isn't enhanced by the deluxe format. Perhaps the editor should consider a new team for this going-nowhere

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comic, given his new role. (PH) **3**

X-Men 39 <+> (Nicieza & Dodson + Ryan) Cyclops' grandfather crashes his plane in the snow-covered wilderness and, near death, meets a mysterious being from another world who pledges to save his life. But just who is this alien? Guest-penciller Terry Dodson produces the best work of his career, showing that sometimes a good inker is all you need. (SB) **9**

INDEPENDENTS

Cerebus 186 (Aardvark-Vanaheim; Sim) Oh, boy. The third book of *Mothers and Daughters* concludes and Dave Sim spells out his personal philosophy on the sexual divide, its link to creativity and the end of the world. Chances are it'll make you uncomfortable. Quite possibly you'll end up hating Sim, screaming "misogynist" and vowing never ever to buy another copy of **cerebus**. Whatever. If you want to read a comic book that will make you think, that will keep you awake at night, long after you've finished reading, buy this. See why it's impossible to give it a mark out of ten. (RH)

Cyberforce 8 <+ -> (Image; Silvestri & McFarlane) It's strange seeing McFarlane draw a team-book, but he's certainly no disappointment. With some dynamic layouts that breathe life into a rather stale filler storyline which bore no connection to previous issues other than the star characters. (SB) **7**

Geomancer 3 <+> (Valiant; Fontenot & Morales + Branch) One of Valiant's better titles. The current Geomancer — an agent of the Planet Earth herself — is blind, which adds an interesting twist to an already entertaining book. Rags Morales' pencil work proves that Valiant has styles other than Barry Windsor-Smith. (SB) **7**

Eternal Warrior 29 (Valiant; Ostrander & Halsted) John Ostrander brings back the evil Caldone, whose life force hops between people's bodies as he carries out his work. An excellent Valiant villain which Ostrander has taken, like this book, out of the doldrums and into the big time. Halsted's art is adequate. (SB) **8**

Evil Ernie: Revenge 1 (Chaos; Pulido & Hughes) Evil Ernie had a very unhappy childhood, so he's dedictade his life to make everyone else's life equal hell, if not worse. Case in point: to celebrate New Year, Ernie drops a satellite on New York! Steven Hughes provides sound visuals, and the Jim Balent pin-up is worth the $2.95 cover price alone. (SB) **8**

H.A.R.D.Corps 26 <+> (Valiant; Baron & Ellis + Nebres) Finally a creative team that's worthy of the potential this title has. Baron instantly transforms the book, and Steve Ellis' pencils, while sketchy, work well. The original team members discover that they've been tricked from the beginning and rebel. However, their employer can kill them in an instant thanks to a nifty brain implant... and he intends to do just that. (SB) **8**

Hellshock 2 (Image; J. Lee) Souls back from hell, a biblical cycle of revenge, violence and damnation... It's hardly new territory but it's tossed off with an assurance and intelligence which makes it more Vertigo than Image — and, stylistically, it's a blast. (MS) **7**

Mantra 14 <+> (Ultraverse; Barr & Heike + Welch) Keeping her uneasy allies together by sheer force of personality, Mantra infiltrates Boneyard's stronghold, intending to free Archimage and finish the villain. But she is not the only one who can deal in illusion... a genuinely shocking ending to a well-conceived tale. (FPB) **8**

Next Men 28 (Dark Horse; Byrne) Jazz awakes to find that the first twenty seven issues have all been a dream. Now she's married to Aldus Hilltop and the Next Men are just an experiment to help astronauts survive long space journeys. Byrne keeps you guessing all the time — you don't really think he's throw all that continuity... but you can never be certain. (RH) **9**

Penthouse Comix 2 <+ -> (Penthouse; various) Porn, erotica, or forbidden fruit, this top-shelf special contains five strips of varying naughtiness plus eight pages of such unrestrained filth from Milo Manara that the nation's newsagents have torn them out to save us from ourselves. Oh, the depravity of it all... (AW) **5**

Radioactive Man 1000 (Bongo; Vance & Morrison) It's a spoof of Todd McFarlane's work this issue, in the final outing for this great superhero with a lightning bolt embedded in his head. Will he get the girl? Will he cope with his new cape? Can he defeat Prawn? It's the end of the road and it's a doozy of a final issue. (SB) **9**

Rune 5 <+ -> (Ultraverse; Windsor Smith + Ulm + Floyd) The twins become victims again when Rune seduces and deceives them, seizing part of their power. Hollow, overblown, motiveless cosmic melodrama, firmly rooted in the worst of 1970s Marvel. (FPB) **5**

<+ +> Gemini the Dark God is born, stripping Rune of his powers and threatening everything around him. BWS's visuals are some of his best and the scripting and colouring are both top notch. (SB) **10**

Savage Dragon 13 <+ +> (Choi + Lee + various) No offence to Erik Larsen, but this is the best issue to date. In what is Jim Lee's final art assignment for the foreseeable future, he turns in his most powerful work to date, while Brandon Choi has a real grasp of the Dragon's character, despite there being a little too much beat-em-up for my liking. (SB) **9**

Shadowman 32 <+ -> (Valiant; Hall + Ryder) The Night Monster has absorbed Shadowman, who meets others who have been "swallowed". It's very far fetched, but it's so bizarre that you've just got to like it. (SB) **9**

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Sludge 9 <-> (Ultraverse; Gerber & Phipps + various) The final showdown between the Pump and the Triads litters the floor with corpses (including one of the main players) and resolves little. A weird, often affecting series, but marred by excesses of cyberpunk violence, like pointlessly turning a woman into a Robo-cop style killing machine. (FPB) **6**

Spawn 19 <-> (Image; Orzechowski + Grossberg & Capullo + Pannington) Batter late than never, I suppose, even if the first of the "missing issues" isn't really worth waiting for. Yes, the artwork from Capullo is great, but the story and script are sadly lacking the usual flair that makes **Spawn** so enjoyable. Tom Orzechowski is the finest letterer in comics today, but that doesn't put him in McFarlane's league for ideas. (SB) **7**

Spawn 24 <+ -> (Image; McFarlane & Capullo) *The Hunt* reaches its climax with Terry — a man now married to the woman Spawn loves — racing to save his family. Spawn finds himself facing a dilemma: save Terry or let him die. McFarlane ties up a number of sub-plots here, while his powerful narration and dynamic artwork keep hooked. (SB) **6**

Spawn 25 (Image; McFarlane & Silvestri) This issue could be deemed a let-down as Silvestri has done his very best to emulate McFarlane's work. While his pencilling style is clearly evident, it's not what I'd hoped for. However, McFarlane continues as writer and as such maintains the usual high standard of the book. (SB) **8**

Strikeback! 1 (Bravura; Peterson & Maguire) Kevin Maguire bounces back into the comics scene and he's better than ever. Peterson introduces some lively, entertaining new characters combined with some clever narration and lifelike dialogue, and Maguire's first rate illustrations mesh perfectly with the story. (SB) **10**

Lovely! Maguire does his best work to date, an artist who really deserves these glossy pages. The story, harking back to the golden JLA days of the Eighties, is of a witty hero with a weird scarf and his kidnapped girlfriend... and that's just the beginning. Unfortunately, there are too many characters introduced at once, but the potential is definitely there.(RH) **8**

Stormwatch 14 (Image; Marz & Phillips + Martin) A powerful story with pencils from Joe Phillips. Battallion has seen the future... and in it he's dead and buried. His father is responsible for the events leading up to his death, so why not kill his father now to prevent it all happening? Not an easy task.(SB) **8**

Unity: The Lost Chapter (Valiant; VanHook & Bair) Billed as a **Unity Yearbook**, we relive the Unity saga once more, albeit without Shooter, in a previously untold X-O Manowar tale far better than the regular series. VanHook writes a good, sound tale but the star of the show is artist Michael Bair, whose work is so full of life it's marvellous. (SB) **9**

Vengeance of Vampirella 7 <+ -> (Harris; Sniegoski & Stinsman) Bonus: an Adam Hughes cover! Consistently an entertaining read in terms of story content, this issue is no letdown. Stinsman's pencils are a little too Image-like for my tastes but it doesn't detract from the entertainment factor whatsoever. (SB) **8**

WildC.A.T.s 14 (Image; Larsen) The Image X month kicks off with Larsen's rendition of the Jim Lee team and while it's not bad, it pales in comparison to previous issues. Still, it's fun and that's what this whole experiment is about, isn't it? Savage Dragon and Freak Force guest-star in a zany, no-holds-barred slugfest. (SB) **7**

X-O Manowar 36 <-> (Valiant; Gonzalez & Levins + Elliot) This current storyline has lost its way somewhat, with X-O back fighting dinosaurs once more. Rik Levins' pencils still look a little stiff and lifeless, but he's settling in. (SB) **5**

UK TITLES

Doctor Who Classic Comics 25 <+> (various) A notch above the normal mix of okay, bad and dreadful reprints, due to the Mills/Wagner/Gibbons *Star Beast* story. Buy now — it's due for the chop. (AW) **5**

Doctor Who: The Dalek Chronicles (Whitaker + Fennell & Turner + Eden + Jennings) Reprinting the Dalek strip in its entirety from **TV21**, this is superior SF from the 1960s. One of Marvel UK's better ideas, and no naff interference from anybody in a police phone box. (AW) **7**

Suicide 1 (Quantum Graphics; Hoskin & Richardson) In what is one of the most refreshing comics to launch in the UK, writer Rik Hoskin crafts a very plaudible tale of a vigilante who really couldn't care less if he goes home in a body bag. The sub-plotting is professionally executed, and artist Ian Richardson doesn't disappoint. A superb new range of characters that deserve at least a look. It's a shame the production isn't better, but in time they are sure to get it sorted. (SB) **8**

2000AD 912 <+> Currently enjoying one of its best runs this decade, this week *Skizz* returns to **2000AD**. He looks very much like a giant kangaroo from space, but it's one of the most originally refreshing strips for ages, again in the capable hands of writer/artist Jim Baikie. Also of note is the John Wagner/Arthur Ranson strip *Button Man* which features dynamic scripting from Wagner and detailed, lifelike visuals from the astounding Ranson. (SB) **8**

Dredd's lushly illustrated if incomprehensible **Megazine** crossover rumbles on, but is upstaged by Millar's seriously nasty *Red Razors*. At the other extreme *Skizz 3* looks set to continue in its SF fairy-story mold, while *Button Man* already feels likes it's in reruns but handles the stock elements well

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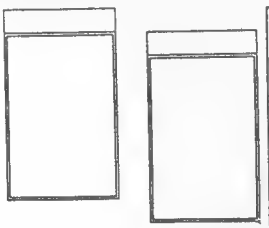

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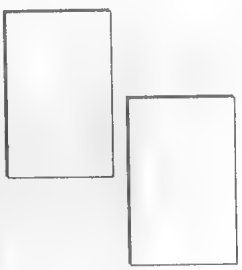

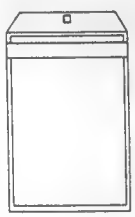

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enough to make it the pick of the bunch. Why Peter Milligan continues to insult our intelligence — as well as his own — with *Bix Barton*, however, is an abiding mystery. (MS) 7

UKCAC '94 Convention Book (Rusty Staples; various) <+ + +> Convention booklets are not usually memorable, but this year's item had a main theme (homage to Jack Kirby) that focused and stimulated artists, resulting in a terrific selection. Fabry, Elliott, Davis/Farmer, Nigel Kitching, and Paul Johnson score for beauty; Beeton, Weston, David Lloyd, Francis, Erasmus and Langridge for wit; and Mike Collins, Brad Brooks and Nigel Dobbyn for sheer emotion. (FPB) 9

SMALL PRESS

Harlequin 5 (£1.50 from Dave Fanning, PO Box 4, 136 Kingsland High Street, Hackney, London E8) Apart from a serial episode packed with drugs, sex, violence, magic and rather weak artwork, the bulk of this comic is taken up with "talking heads" pages which cover existential philosophies very seriously and rather effectively. An interesting sample of the new underground comics. (MK) 6

Inner City Pagan 3 (£1.25 from Lee Kennedy, Slab-O-Concrete Publications, PO Box 298, Sheffield S10 1YU) Sketches and notes from the author's visit to her ancestral land (which one? Well, her name is Kennedy; think about it). Lee has an eye for telling detail that makes her rough sketches worth having; but I wish she would go back to full-fledged cartooning. (FPB) 7

Jack Kirby Quarterly 2 <+ +> (Amplitude Concepts; £1.15 from Chris Harper, 25 Napier Drive, The Parklands, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 7NW) This third issue (after #0) is a vast improvement. The mediocre fan art and golly-gee gushery has been canned in favour of loads more rare and unpublished art from Kirby and intelligent appraisals of aspects of his work. Cheap at twice the price. (AW) 8

Microzine Monthly (£5 for a year's subscription, from Slab-O-Concrete, PO Box 148, Hove BN3 3DQ) For your fiver, you'll receive a dozen tiny comics distributed by Slab-O-Concrete in which various creators display their styles and have fun with formats. In current offering **Castle Marlon** — Andy Hemingway's wry tale of an evil landlord's attempts to collect the rent from his monstrous tenants — is very smartly drawn. (MK) 7

Sav and Kath: A Luv Story (£0.90 from Bob Lynch, 87 Heddington Grove, London N7 9SZ) How do you describe Bob Lynch at his best? If I said "Terrific, wildly imaginative, brilliantly drawn humour with a serious core and a human touch", it would be quite out of keeping with the modesty, self-irony and humour of this wonderful author. One of the most underrated artist in Britain. (FPB) 8

Tales From Sleaze Castle 4 (£1.50 from Gratuitous Bunny Comix, 33 Windsor Drive, Cleadon, Sunderland SR6 7SY) The cover says it all: Panda goes home at last. But not before arousing the gravest suspicions in a genuine Thai acquaintance of Jo's — and not before realising that she is going to miss Jo. Still — as she says while floating in the swimming pool of her palace — it's good to be home. (FPB) 10

Tales of Skittle-Sharpeners and Thimble-Riggers 5 (£1.50 from Sam Peck & Chris Hogg, To Yield Press, 32 Cemetary Avenue, Sheffield, S11 8NT) Having come late to this mysterious series, I don't know what is supposed to be happening: a fair-haired bloke seems to have drawn public odium because of some sexual impropriety — probably never committed. The story ranges back and forth with little respect for the arrow of time, but has a sympathetic feel and wonderful Chris Hogg artwork. (FPB) 8

The Sweeney Boys (£1.25 from Richard Smith, 35 Devonshire Place, Brighton BN2 1QB) One lousy CCG award and you're up to your armpits in imitators, eh? Richard Smith's parody of *The Sweeney*, in the style of Ralph (**Captain Dolphin**) Kidson (still no relation), expertly catches the series' flavour and sidesplittingly exaggerates its stereotyping. It's amazing how hilarious kipper ties can be... (MK) 9

Turn 1 (£1 from Reubs Wilmott, 19 Melbourne Rd, Ipswich IP4 5PP) Jon Stafford's Steadman-ish *Frisky Pig* is superb, Phil Elliot and Lloyd Thatcher's *Stevo* takes a sly dig at the comics industry and Willmott's teenage horror story is chilling and imaginative. A varied and generally excellent anthology. (MK) 8

Anything with a pig's bottom on the front cover has to be worth investigating. Jon Stafford's *Frisky Pig* is the strip which stands out and the package has the feel of editorial genius about it. An excellent anthology. (PH) 8

Windy Wilberforce: The Saga of the Scroll 1 (Ed Pinsent; £2.00 from 43 Finsen Rd, London SE5) A deliberately and elaborately strange package, telling the adventures of a large and benevolent-looking hero wandering through a dream landscape. Despite the careful childishness, there is an air of artifice about this I don't like; but Pinsent is clearly an important author. (FPB) 7

Wolf Who Thunders 0 (Sample issue from Nigel Lowry, 2 Beacham Road, Holmers Farm Estate, High Wycombe, Bucks) Lowry is the artist of Rol Hirst's **The Jock** and is possibly one of the most prolific artists on the small press scene at the moment. With this, his first solo comic, he shows that where he is no writer he is far better at drawing superheroic situations than the quieter work he does on **The Jock**. I confidently predict that he will soon be one of the next crop of British exports. (PH) 7

Titles for review should be sent to: **Comics International**, 8 Trinity Road, London N2 8JJ.

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The Comics Warehouse EXTRA PAGE

Yeess, ladies & gentlemen, The Warehouse is so full this Christmas that it's taking a whole five pages to tell you about just some of the goodies we have in stock for you. This single page containing TOYS, T-SHIRTS & TRADING CARDS stands here in splendid isolation whilst our regular four page advertisement listing comics & magazines from our stock of over half a million books is on pages **64 to 67**
Our stockholding of these goods is extremely limited and will be supplied on a first come first served basis, although we do have a few rules & regs which we would like you to follow when compiling your order. Please list the Computer Code, The Product & the Price. Our minimum acceptable order as always is £5.00 plus a £3.00 flat fee for shipping whatever the size of your order. As we have four distinct product stream this month: TOYS, T-SHIRTS. TRADING CARDS & COMICS, please make your minimum from one of those categories before moving on to add in other products. Space on this page is tight, so may I refer you to our full ordering requirements in our advertisement on pages **64 to 67**. It just remains for me to say, totally enjoy your Winter Solstice and may all your Aliens be positronic take care ... we hope to hear from you soon.

Deadline this page December 10th.

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Trading Cards are growing in popularity. We get promotional cards all the time and tend to give them away with our parcels and mailings to customers. When Trading Cards started to accumulate in our Warehouse, we debated whether to break the boxes and sell individual packs or offer complete boxes and manufacturers sets only. We've opted for the latter so **all the cards listed here are in unopened full boxes or manufacturers sets.** Quantities are severely limited and multiple quantity orders are not encouraged. Those of you who know cards will need no further explanation. For those of you new to cards, don't make a purchase from this section, buy some card oriented magazines first and get a feel for the genre.

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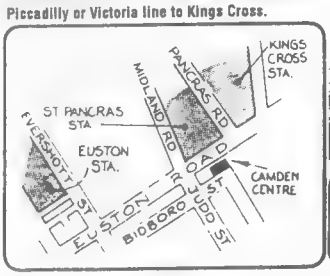

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Code to abbreviations used:

w/s	= wholesale available
dis	= bulk discount terms
cat	= catalogue available
s-cat	= sae for catalogue
s-wants	= sae with wants lists
CoBRA	= Comic Book Retailers' mail order protection scheme
cc	= major credit cards accepted
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GOLDEN AGE TITLES

Generally acknowledged as being published between 1938 and 1945 but herein designated to cover all pre-Silver Age American comics

■ **Incognito**, 14 Starnes Court, Union Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EB. (s-wants, CoBRA, cc) Phone/Fax 0622-683642

■ **Silver Acre Comics**, The Studio Cottage, Edern, Pwllheli, Gwynedd LL53 6JD (s-wants, cc) 0758-720 532

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Road, Barnet, EN4 8RF (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 081-449 5535

SILVER AGE TITLES

*Generally deemed to commence in 1955 with DC Comics' hero rebirth through **Detective 225** (introducing the Martian Manhunter) and **Showcase 4** (introducing the new Flash), herein covering up to late 1960s.*

■ **Cosmic Comics**, PO Box 1771, London E17 9PW. (cat, wants, CoBRA)

■ **Incognito**, 14 Starnes Court, Union Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EB. (s-wants, CoBRA, cc) Phone/fax 0622-683642

■ **Just Comics**, 2 Crossmead Ave, Greenford, Middx UB6 9TY (cat-28p, CoBRA)

■ **Select Comics**, PO Box 39, Derby DE1 9TD (cat, wants) 0332-340984

■ **Silver Acre Comics**, The Studio Cottage, Edern, Pwllheli, Gwynedd LL53 6JD (s-wants, cc) 0758-720 532

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POST-SILVER AGE

Comics from the 1970s to date: Bronze Age-Marvel Age-Lead Age up to Platinum Age-Valiant Age-Image Age. Historians will doubtless decide on a name.

■ **AmerCom**, 36 Glan Morfa, Llandudno Junction, Gwynedd LL29 9AA (s-cat)

■ **Comics Warehouse**, PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 0621 850351

■ **Cosmic Comics**, PO Box 1771, London E17 9PW. (cat, wants, CoBRA)

■ **David Johnson**, 45 Broadmead, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9AW (s-cat, dis, s-wants)

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Road, Barnet, Herts EN4 8RF (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 081-449 5535

HOT COMICS

Current or key titles, usually first issues or first appearances of major characters. Investment titles for speculators willing to gamble on what will increase in value.

■ **Comics Unlimited**, Unit 11, The Arcade, Letchworth, Hertfordshire. (wants, CoBRA) 0462 480018

■ **Cosmic Comics**, PO Box 1771, London E17 9PW. (cat, wants, CoBRA)

■ **Edge of Forever, The**, 82 b Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7LW. (wants, CoBRA, cc) 081-298 1363

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Rd, Barnet, EN4 8RF (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 081-449 5535

ADVANCE IMPORTS

US comics are not in newsagents, except for almost all DCs and most $1.25 Marvels, shipped seafreight. The following offer air-shipped copies from all major publishers.

■ **ACE Comics**, 1 Headgate Buildings, St Johns Street, Colchester, Essex C02 7AD (wants, cat, CoBRA, cc) 0206 561912

■ **Comics Unlimited**, Unit 11, The Arcade, Letchworth, Herts SG6 3ET (s-cat,s-wants) 0462 480018

■ **Edge of Forever, The**, 82 b Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7LW. (wants, CoBRA, cc) 081-298 1363

■ **Floppy Tongue**, 96 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP2 7QY (cat, w/s, wants, CoBRA) 0722 331107

■ **Forbidden Planet**, 71 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DG (s-cat, cc) 071 497 2150

■ **Gosh! Strips by Mail**, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH 071 636 1011

■ **Mega-City Comics**, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ (s-cat, cc, CoBRA) 071 485 9320

■ **Planet X**, 5 London Road, Worcester WR5 2DJ (wants,CoBRA) Phone/fax: 0905 355055

■ **Red Hot Comics**, 42 Berridale Ave, Cathcart, Glasgow G44 3AE (CoBRA, s-wants) 041-637 0162 (10am-11pm)

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Road, Barnet, EN4 8RF (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 081-449 5535

■ **Timezone**, 12 Fish St, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 1UR (dis, cat, wants) 0743 365192

LIMITED EDITIONS

Many high-profile mini-series and one-shots are also available in limited, numbered and often autographed editions (s&n). New titles, to acquire copyright, can also appear in small print-run "ashcan" editions (ash).

■ **Edge of Forever, The**, 82 b Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7LW. (wants, CoBRA, cc, s&n) 081-298 1363

NEW **Giant Poster Company**, PO Box 52, Southport PR8 2BR. (ltd edtn prints of Judge Dredd/2000AD cover art, UK sales only, leaflet on request) 0704 551150

■ **Stateside Comics**, 125 East Barnet Rd, Barnet, EN4 8RF (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc, ash, s&n) 081-449 5535

TRADING CARDS

An increasing number of traders carry a wide range of comics-related trading cards and their peripherals (files, folders, etc).

■ **Adventure Seekers!**, 105 Hullbrook Road, Billesley, Birmingham, B13 0LE (cat, wants) 021 444 0986

■ **Beyond Comics & Books**, 76 Harlescott Rd, Nunhead, London SE15 3BZ (s-cat, s-wants, sae, CoBRA) tel/fax 071 639 7171

CR Cards, 47 Grove Road, Chadwell Heath,

NEW Romford, Essex RM6 4AQ (cat, wants, CoBRA) 081 599 9306

■ **Discount Trading Cards**, 18 Birch Ave, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 4DG (cat, wants, dis, CoBRA) 061 494 8369

■ **Edge of Forever, The**, 82 b Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7LW. (wants, CoBRA, cat, cc) 081-298 1363

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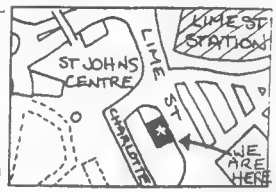

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MOVERS & SHAKERS

The latest news, views and rumours in our ever-popular independent look at the hits, misses, prices, projects and people making comics news. Reported by the ever mysterious and controversial team of investigative diggers and delvers known to the world only as ITMA.

Web of intrigue

RUMOUR has it that Marvel is about to fall foul of the Comics Code of Authority with **The Amazing Spider-Man** yet again, 25 years after the controversial drugs story in **Amazing Spider-Man** #96-98.

In 1988, the Spider-Man titles also fell foul of moral watchdog groups after the conclusion of *Kraven's Last Hunt*, when the the long-time Spider-Man villain committed suicide as a direct result of his never being able to stop Spider-Man.

Now Marvel is bracing itself as the man we have known as Peter Parker for nearly twenty years discovers he is but a copy of the original and commits suicide!

Controversial stuff, but not difficult to overcome. If Peter Parker does turn out to be a clone of himself, Marvel could argue that this creature had no right to be alive and therefore in taking its own life it is only the life of a non-person, a carbon-copy of the original.

Initially, fans believed that the big event was either going to be Aunt May or Mary Jane dying, but apparently Marvel believed that such a death of supporting female characters wouldn't generate enough interest to return Spider-Man to the top of the sales charts.

So what will happen to Ben Reilly, the Scarlet Spider? Is he the real Peter Parker, or are we in for even more surprises in 1995? The controversial storyline begins in the February-shipping **Amazing Spider-Man** #400.

X-pect the unX-pected

ANOTHER big rumour circulating around the US at the moment concerns what Marvel has got planned for the X-Men family following the *After Xavier* storyline in the April cover-dated comics.

A couple of hints were recently dropped when one of X-books writers announced, "nothing will ever be the same again" and another said, "X-pect X-pansion".

Mutant aficionados have speculated already that the four month storyline could clear up many of the continuity problems (and failed storylines!). Expect some of the following things to take effect after the end of the story:

- Wolverine will get his adamantium-laced skeleton back, but may lose one of his hands.
- Jean Grey will find she still has the Phoenix force and has never been married to Scott Summers.
- Bishop will not exist in our timeline, but will feature strongly in the pages of projected *X-Men from the future* mini-series planned for late next year.
- There may be at least three new series as a result and **Cable**'s comic will be re-titled **The X-Man**.
- Archangel will revert to the Angel and gets his real wings back.
- Adam X, known to **X-Force** readers as Extreme, will discover that he is Scott and Alex Summers half-brother and the link to Mr Sinister will be revealed.
- Most important, certain events in the current history of the X-teams will cease to have ever happened. *The Dark Phoenix Saga* will not have taken place and certain characters that have died or been drastically altered in recent years may not be dead or different any more.

Obviously, a lot of this could well be intelligent marketing by Marvel to tempt former readers back who have grown disillusioned with the sprawling and complex continuity of the X-Men titles. *Movers & Shakers* suspects that everything will be back to normal in May — if it ain't broke (and it is over 1/3rd of Marvel's turnover) why fix it!

Big in America 2

AFTER last issue's rundown of the top ten selling current comics in the US, we now present their top ten hottest Silver Age comics.

Silver Age comics have remained relatively stable since the speculator boom of the early '90s and the following titles have been earning back issue dealers a premium over the last three months. How many have been doing the same over here?

- **Action Comics** #252 features the first appearance of Supergirl (who it is rumoured is to get her own series next year). This is a very hot commodity regardless of condition and near mint copies have sold for as high as $1,000.
- **Amazing Spider-Man** #14 has been a heavily patronised comic for about five years and despite the death of the current Green Goblin in **Spectacular Spider-Man** #200, this first appearance of one of Spidey's most infamous villains has been selling in near mint for between $900 and $1,100.
- **Batman** #181 features the first appearance of Poison Ivy, the character who has made an impact in the Batman animated series. When **Batman** #181 first shipped, it came with a poster insert and US dealers are insisting that only copies with the poster can be considered complete. The average price is about $100 and rising.
- **Blackhawk** is a title which has never received any speculative interest (from anybody other than our esteemed editor). But now the first appearance of the team under the DC imprint, #108 (acquired, from Quality, along with **GI Combat** in 1957) is coming in for attention. Current US selling price is $350.
- **Brave and the Bold** #1 has always been one of the most difficult DC comics to find and along with **Showcase**, **Brave and the Bold** has long been a main target for Silver Age collectors. #1, which introduces Joe Kubert's *Viking*

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Prince, is currently selling upwards of $1500, but has been seen for as high as $2000 in very high grade.

● **Captain America** #110 is one of Jim Steranko's most critically acclaimed issues. Copies are selling for between $60 and $100 and US dealers have said that many new collectors are buying Steranko comics and they expect this title to be one of the key issues.

● **Daredevil** #7 is one of those mismatched fights which Marvel became famous for during the Sixties. This particular issue features the Man Without Fear (in his new all-red costume) taking on the Sub-Mariner, in an issue drawn by Wally Wood. Current selling price is $150 and rising.

● **Detective Comics** #359 is the first appearance of the new Batgirl (Barbara Gordon) and despite this being in guides for no more than $30, the price has all but doubled since **Zero Hour**. US dealers are offering to buy this key Bat-issue for as much as $50 in high grade.

● **Fantastic Four** #11 is the first appearance of both the Impossible Man and Marvel's eccentric, ear-wiggling mailman, Willy Lumpkin. Regarded as one of the most difficult **Fantastic Four** issues to find, the current selling price for this is $450.

● The last title in the American hot top ten is **Green Lantern** #59, the first appearance of Guy Gardner. This book came in for a lot of attention at the end of the Eighties (during the early run of Giffen, DeMatteis and Maguire's **Justice League**) and it seems that the regained popularity of Gardner has made this comic all the rage again in the US. **Green Lantern** #59 peaked at $150 during its first speculative period, and now sells for up to $200.

Meanwhile, over here... Jon Browne at They Walk Among Us has recently helped his bank balance no end, by selling a very fine copy of **Batman** #1 for £17,500.

The issue, which had some slight restoration to remove a subscription crease, has a small chip on the back page and the unverified dedication on the back cover pin-up, reading "To Sid, compliments of Batman and Robin from their creator Bob".

Nevertheless, despite defects, it sold above guide, as an unrestored copy in the same grade is valued in the new **Overstreet Gold & Silver Quarterly** at $24,000 (£16,000).

Tek no notice

DESPITE having big plans and an ambitious sale or return policy for retailers, it seems that Tekno Comix is already facing an uphill struggle to gain credibility.

This issue's *ComicWatch* features the comments of UK retailers, and only 50% of them believe that the new comics publisher will succeed. Of that 50%, most feel that if Tekno produce good comics they might make it, but if first releases aren't favourable as soon as the sale or return policy ends, the company might soon follow.

Tekno managed to place in the top 30 of most distributors, but when you consider that there is no risk to the retailer when ordering, this is not such an awesome debut.

Most UK retailers have ordered modest quantities of the new line — the Neil Gaiman created **Mr Hero, the Newmatic Man** having proven to be the most popular, with Leonard Nimoy's **The Primortals** and Gene

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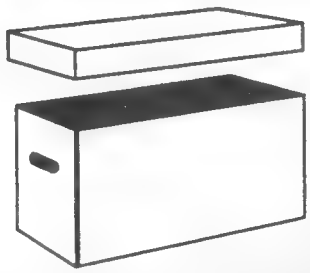

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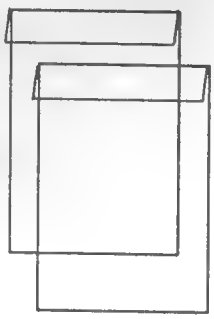

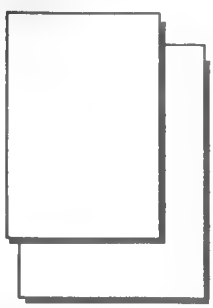

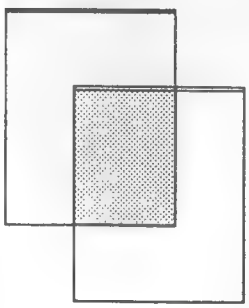

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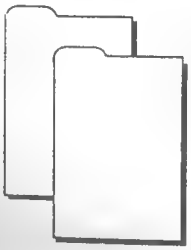

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Roddenberry's **The Lost Universe** being ordered lower.

When asked if Tekno would succeed where others haven't, UK retailers responded with a resounding NO! Encouragingly, all but one did say that they would stock the comics however. Would they have been so keen if the books hadn't been returnable?

One of the glossy US comics feature magazines recently suggested, in its gossip column, that Big Entertainment has little hopes for its Tekno imprint, but will continue to publish to create concepts for feature film and television companies to option. An R&D tank which may pay its way.

Skrulls: The comic?

REMEMBER the very first appearance of the alien Skrulls? Way back in the second issue of **Fantastic Four**, Reed Richards and the team managed to trick the shape-shifting extra-terrestrials into adopting the forms of cows.

Now, over thirty years later, there is to be a new series featuring Skrulls, cows and weird alien beasties written by DC mainstay Grant Morrison and bosom buddy Mark (**Swamp Thing**) Millar.

Incidentally, Morrison has apparently been having discussions with Spider-family group editor Bob Budianski about writing the Wall-crawler on a regular basis.

On the Skrulls front, our editor came up with an interesting plot... If Kansas (or wherever) farmers believe these creatures to be real cows, chances are pretty good they'll have been milking them for years.

Skrull protoplasm, disguised as milk, could lead to interesting effects once ingested by healthy school kids. But would they still remain human? Over to you, Grant.

A Limited success

EARLIER this year, Marvel began producing a series of allocation-only products including leather-bound hardcover reprint books and limited edition prints. The range is entitled **Marvel Limited** and the specially bound volumes have included reprints of the best **X-Men**, **Fantastic Four** and Frank Miller stories, with a print run of 1,100. The catch is (or the low print run because) they are only available to retailers who are up to date on their accounts with distributors. UK & US outlets number around 6,500, so there must be a lot of late payers out there!

With less than 150 copies of each of the **Marvel Limited** products in this country, it was not unsurprising to hear that one of the first books released, **Fantastic Firsts**, (featuring the first appearances of the Fantastic Four, Daredevil, Hulk, Thor, Sgt Fury, Ant-Man and Iron Man) has recently been sold for £300.

DC in the spring

DC COMICS is planning an *Elseworlds* mini-series in the same format as **Marvels**.

The new series which is set twenty years in the future is written by current fan-favourite Mark Waid and will be painted by Alex Ross.

No details are available about the series at the moment except that there *will be* a big fight and *everybody* will die!

● After the relative success of this year's *Elseworlds* annuals, next year DC is intending to dedicate all of the annuals to a *Year One* theme.

The Superman annuals will contain a continuing story which not only looks at Clark's first year as a superhero (without costume) but also covers Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen's first year on the **Daily Planet**.

As Batman's first year as a crimefighter has already been well documented, the onus of the Dark Knight's annuals will be on the early lives of Commissioner Gordon, his daughter Barbara, Alfred and a couple of untold tales featuring the first two Robins, Dick Grayson and Jason Todd.

● Also planned in 1995 is a new four-part prestige mini-series featuring another DC and Dark Horse team-up.

Expected to follow the **Superman Aliens** series will be the Ron (**Green Lantern**) Marz and Bernie (**Captain Sternn**) Wrightson rendered **Batman vs Aliens**, which leads on directly from the Man of Steel's encounter with Ripley's bane and links to **Batman-Predator**.

● Vertigo editor (recently promoted to senior editor) Stuart Moore is currently working on the creation of an SF line of comics for DC called Matrix Comics. He has already lined up a number of projects from established SF novelists. Expect a line of ongoing series and one-shots by the middle of 1995.

Thor in sex shock

THE RUMOURS are indeed true. Warren Ellis, currently Marvel's shining star, is to revamp **Thor**.

The Southend-based writer is to reconstruct the Norse God, doing away with most of the supporting cast, changing the costume and allowing Thor to have s*x. "I am throwing out every aspect of the book that Kirby even sniffed at. I'm going to rip the roof off," he said.

The four-issue storyline called *WorldEngine* will probably be scheduled for the summer, but Warren states that he will only write the four-parter and, to quote, "will let someone else play with the toys I've built."

For newcomer artist Brian Ashmore, Warren Ellis is also working on **Ashes** (his totally deconstructed Marvel universe **What If** story) provided he can "get the Nick-Fury-as-CIA-cannibal scene through", he said.

Also on the drawing board is **Satana: Poisoned Kisses**, a one-shot with art by Steve (**Animal Man**) Pugh, planned also for the summer. It promises to be big nasty horror stuff, with no comics code, carrying on from **Hellstorm**.

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Richard Clark
53 Meldon Terrace, Newcastle

WHY are the Superman comics crap? I don't want to get in to an argument about whether I have the right to an opinion. I buy and read the comic, I *can* have an opinion.

Maybe crap is too strong a word, but they are not as good as they can be or have been. I have only been reading comics for roughly five years, but the first one I bought was **Action** #642, which I think was one of the best Superman stories ever. Comparing the Superman family now to then, the stories were fast paced and exciting and lasted one issue. Now they are slow and leaded as a result, I believe, of being too interlinked between titles, so stories are getting padded out with only one plot. Superman was much better during the time of *The Brainiac Trilogy* when many plots where happening.

Now compare **Superman** to **Flash** (a title that's always been good, not just recently). The colour in Superman comics is dull and holds the stories back. In **Flash**, the colours are bright, the irony being this colour was introduced into the Superman titles to improve them.

Take a look at **Superboy**, he really enjoys being able to leap tall buildings and being more powerful than a locomotive. Superman these days is always depressed about something, or he can't use his full powers, he just doesn't enjoy being Superman — Clark Kent is occasionally allowed a smile but not often — so how can we enjoy reading about him?

I don't hate Superman, I just want him to lighten up and live life to the full. After all, he is Superman.

The good old days were so much better, eh? Me, I preferred those whimsical old 10c issues. Welcome to nostalgia, Richard (Dez)

Suresh Ananth
11 Chipstead Gdns, London

A SUGGESTION for a monthly column — *Reviews Revisited*. Here, I would like your reviewers to look over their collection and comment on the highlights of each title. I would also like these highlights to be story-led ones.

Also, while giving the issue numbers, please give outlines as to contents of these issues. One other point, give the issue numbers of the "fill-ins"! I can't open all the comic bags, can I?

Of course, if you ran such a column, it would give only a guide, but nevertheless, I would find such a guide very useful.

Close, Suresh. We're about to kick off a new column focusing on historical highpoints often overlooked, but with a twist. We're asking top UK creators to tell us their Desert Island Comics *instead of our already overworked reviewers. But thanks for the idea, they're always welcomed. (Dez)*

Marshall Rees
8 Heol-Y-Parc, Evanstown

THANKS for the best comics newspaper in the world. Ever since issue 20 I've never missed an issue.

Hey, controversy's fine. But a bit of flattery never hurt either. Thanks, Marshall. (Dez)

Mike Kidson
40 Marmion Rd, Liverpool

ANDY Brewer is more than capable of defending his editorial decisions regarding **Battleground - BG** against Darren Mason's rather wild suppositions (*Comment*, **Comics International** #48), but as someone who passed a lot of small press contacts to Andy when he was floating his ideas for the 'zine and is therefore one of those "contributors" who Darren believes have pushed Andy into a change of direction, I'd like to make a few points.

Despite the faintly apologetic tone of his editorials, I seriously doubt that anyone could push Andy into doing something — he knows what he likes and what he wants. The fact is that during the last year Andy has completely lost interest in mainstream comics. As any 'zine editor will tell you, producing a 'zine like **Battleground** can take up to a third of your waking life: Andy simply doesn't wish to devote that amount of time to something in which he's not interested. As he states quite clearly in the editorial of **Battleground** #6, this is entirely his own decision.

Having deemed the contributors to be responsible for an editorial

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decision, Darren proceeds to attack the editor from something that will be the responsibility of **BG**'s readers. Nowhere does Andy state that he intends to "sterilise" the 'zine's lettercol; it's clear that he assumes those people who write in hotly debating the merits of mainstream comics — people like Darren — will simply drop out.

This is indeed likely, and Darren is right to lament the consequence of a forum for length discussion of the mainstream. But instead of taking the easy option of attacking someone who is no longer interested in that particular aspect of the medium, I'd suggest that he could put his arguments into practice and start his own mainstream 'zine.

Andy started **Battleground** with no money and no resources other than a cheap word processor and a willingness to work hard: that's all you need.

Finally, Darren's remarks about the small press suggest that he draws a very old-fashioned distinction between mass market publishers and everyone else.

A view of comics which holds that anyone who publishes in print runs of less than six figures is small press not only lacks any sense of differentiation, it also implicitly dismisses creativity from discussion of the medium. Andy's decision to cover "indie/alternative *and* small press comics" (my italics) in **BG** embraces such obscure "small press" figures as Kurtzman, Crumb, Spiegleman, Eisner, Shelton — good grief, it even includes Hergé, Goscinny & Uderzo and Jack Kirby!

If Darren seriously intends to dismiss these and innumerable others as minor figures compared to anyone who's ever pencilled a Marvel or DC title, then I'm forced to conclude that he's not a fan of the comics *medium* — he's a fan of a comics *genre* who assesses artistic skill according to sales figures.

Alan Booth
Sheffield, South Yorks

FORGIVE me, Dez, but I have to make this comment to someone. It might as well be you.

Tekno Comix: high concept ideas and creators. Wow! Let's rope in a *major* star. What about Mister Spock. Leonard Nimoy. Can we get him? I mean, he's bound to have some knockout ideas for a new comic strip, right? Get him on the phone. Ask him what he'd like to do. Grovel. Get me something terrific and original and *exciting!!*

And what do we get?

Primortals! A fully dressed rhino-dinosaur with attitude.

High concept excitement and originality or what?

Definitely what. As in "what the f***..."

I mean, Yaawwwwwwnnnnnnn!

Dear, oh dear, oh dear.

Andy Roberts
25 Hart Street, Oxford

I'm writing to express my amazement and disgust at Darren Mason's critical piece in *Comment* (**Comics International #48**) about **Battleground**.

It's a fanzine. Editor Andy Brewer's intention is to cover the areas of comics he's interested in; his interests have changed since **Battleground** started. No-one pays him to do his 'zine. It's a labour of love, pure and simple. It goes out to a few hundred readers who are fellow enthusiasts. And yet, just because Andy wants to change his own, small-circulation 'zine to follow his new interests, Mason characterises him as a smug, elitist megalomaniac: "[he] thinks he's a cross between Gary Groth and Jesus Christ." I think it's unwise to fling around adjectives like "self- opinionated" and "anal retentive" when you're treating a fun, homegrown fan magazine as if it were some big-time voice in the industry dictating what people should read.

Andy is quite right that the mainstream is already covered elsewhere; why should he spend his (diminishing) spare time on it if he's no longer interested? I agree that the mainstream/underground mix in **Battleground** was a good idea -- but if Mason's so red-in-the-face about it, he should start his own 'zine (and then watch while self-important idiots like himself sneer at him for not covering *their* favourite comics)!

Darren shows his level of understanding when he accuses Andy of sanitising the 'zine. When Andy said "the confrontational aspect of [the letters column] will probably be reduced", he didn't mean *he* was going to tone it down! It just means there *may* be less controversy because the mainstream diehards won't be writing in.

Perhaps the worst thing about the piece is that, instead of sending it to **Battleground** itself where it undoubtedly belongs, Mason chose to send it to **Comics International**, where most people won't have read **Battleground** and therefore won't know what snide rubbish this attack is. Darren is cowardly as well as foolish.

It's worth pointing out that subscriptions to the new **BG** have gone *up*. So, who's the smug elitist here? Not Andy Brewer who, last I heard, was having to consider giving up his hobby because of work and family pressures. People like Darren Mason must make him wonder if it's worth bothering anyway. I think it is, and I hope he finds a way to continue.

Hopefully we risk nobody's wrath covering both small press and corporate, mainstream and indie titles in discussion, news and reviews. Believing in the need for both a ***Battleground*** *title and Andy's new* ***BG****, I suggested to Joel Meadows - editor of* ***Tripwire*** *- that he might like to pick up Andy's mainstream leftover letters and comments for his own title.*

Let's hope that this will result in both areas prospering. *(Dez)*

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Comic Book Retail Agreement

CoBRA

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With the increasing audience for buying comics by post, reputable organisations risk suffering because of any unsatisfactory mail order transaction new readers of this magazine may have had elsewhere.

To reassure readers, **Comics International** has instigated a Mail Order Code of Practice, with participating businesses displaying the above logo in their advertisements, lists and catalogues.

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i Advertisers will state in print their standard despatch period for published goods, which will be within 28 days of receipt of payment.

ii In the event of items having sold out, customers will be offered a full cash refund for these goods.

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vi CoBRA cannot adjudicate over well-protected goods damaged by postal authorities, but a claim can be made by both vendor and purchaser against the assigned carrier.

Mail Order Retailers: If you agree to abide by the above conditions and wish to add a CoBRA MOPS symbol to your advertisements and catalogues, please submit your trading name and address with full name, personal address and telephone number of your business's proprietor with a first year annual subscription fee of £5.00 to cover administration costs (made payable to *Comics International, CoBRA account*) to:

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The **CoBRA MOPS** agreement abides by the Advertising Standards Authority's Code of Mail Order Advertising Practice

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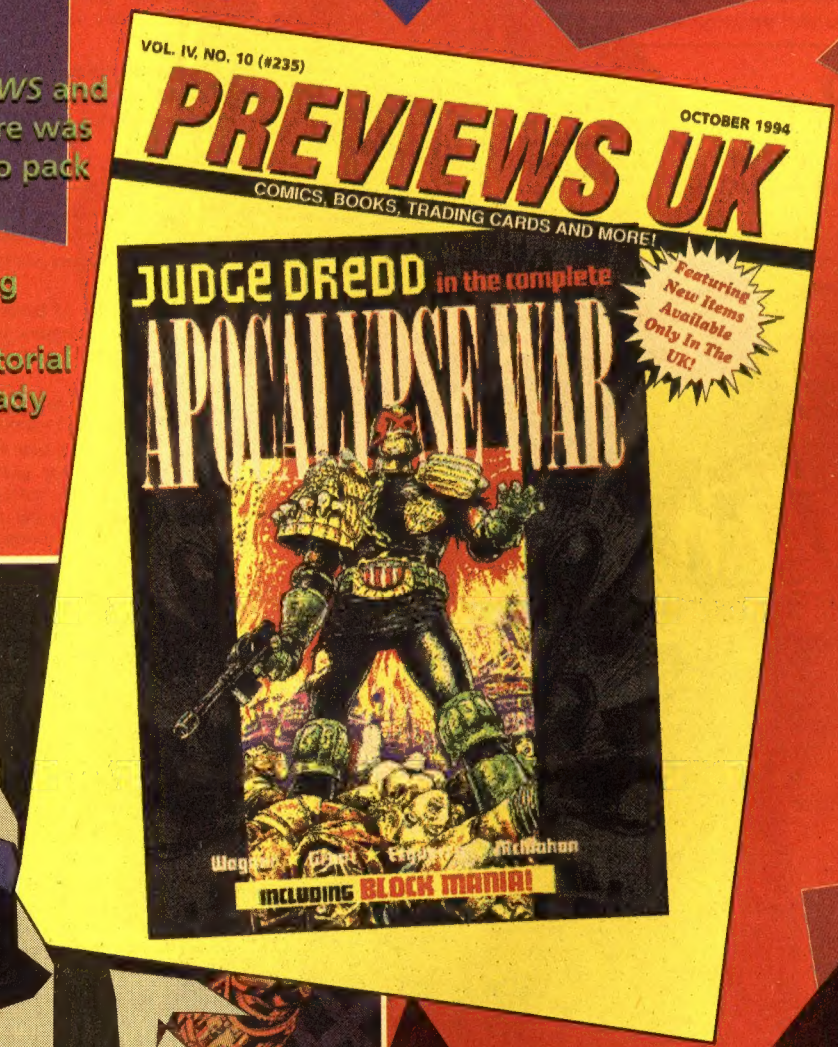
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